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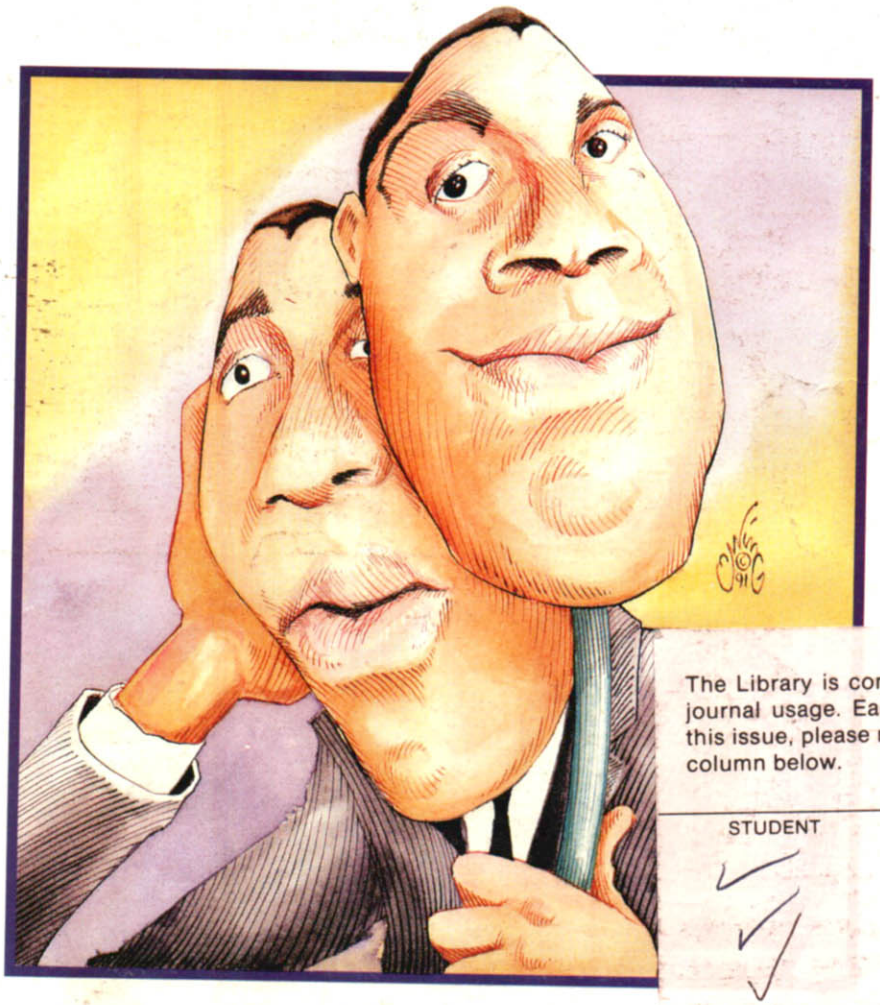
FEBRUARY 1992 A MONTHLY REVIEW EDITED BY R. EMMETT TYRRELL, JR.

This Magic Moment

by Michael Fumento



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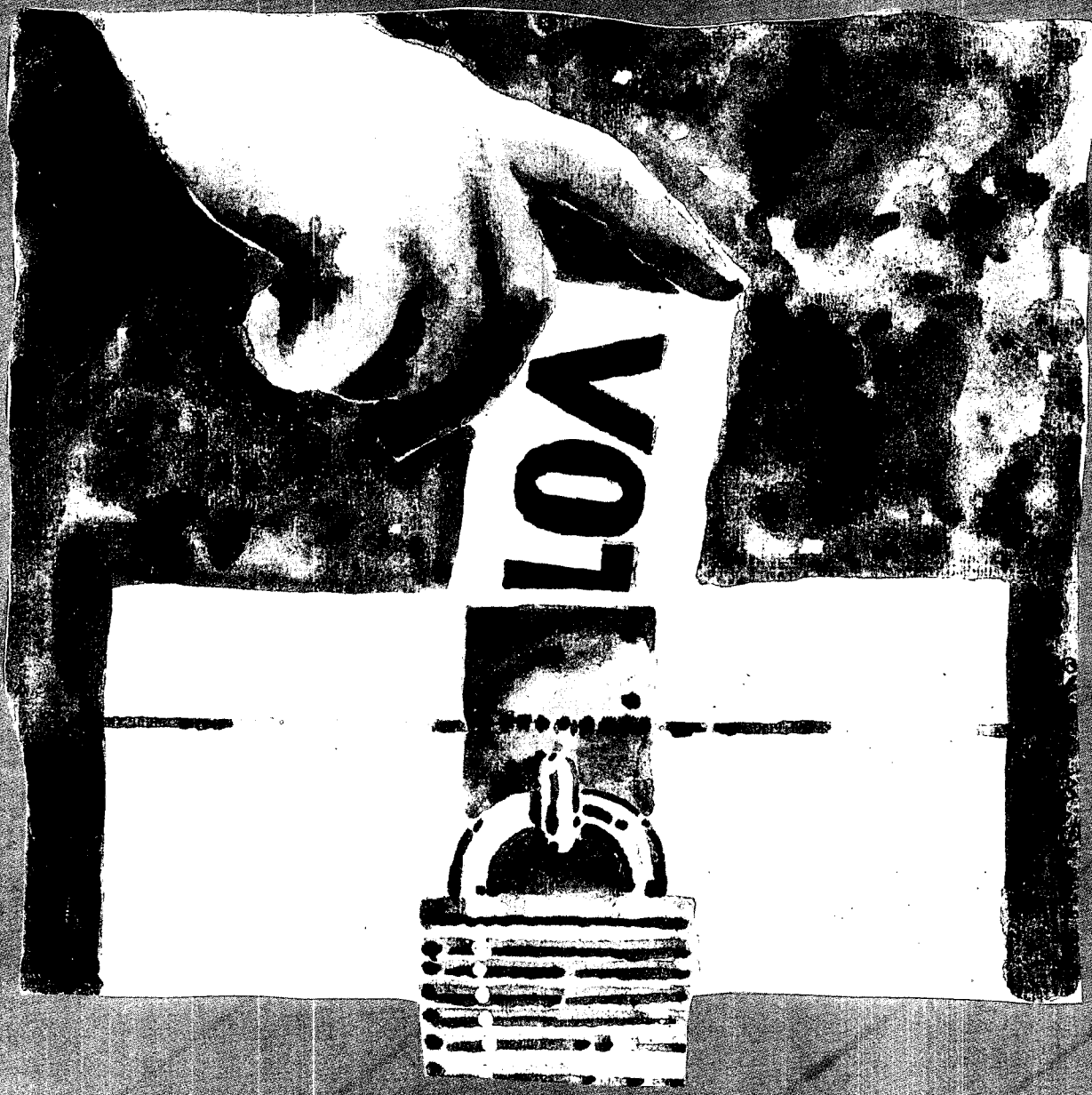

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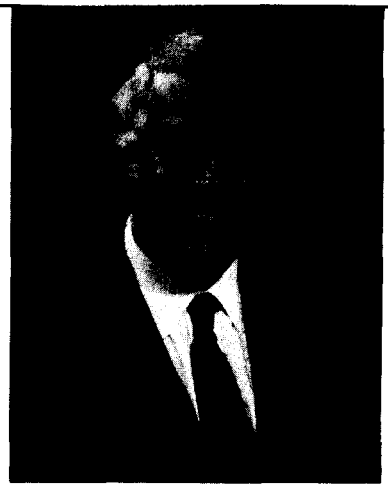

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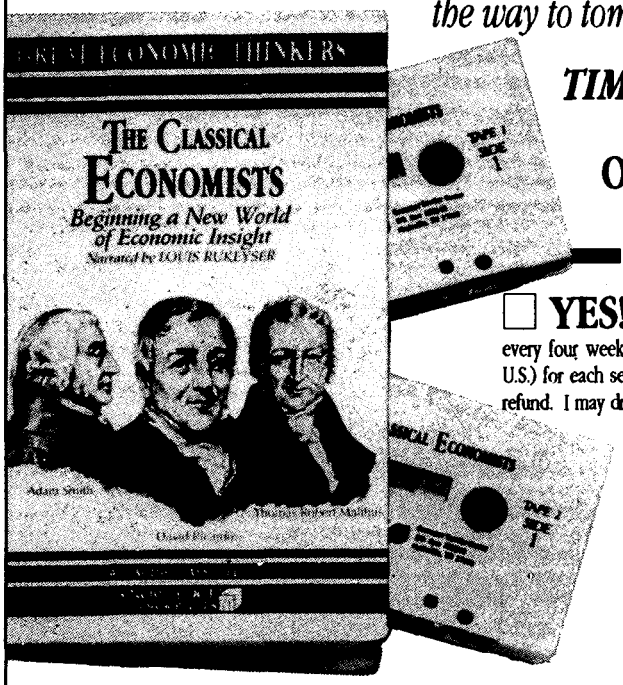

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What are the facts?

■ Despite decisive military defeats in the wars that they have launched against the Jewish state since the very day of its birth, the Arabs, in an almost unbelievable act of mental acrobatics, deny the existence of the country that has inflicted such severe and repeated punishment on them. When it becomes inevitable to mention the Jewish state it is referred to only as "the Zionist entity".

■ This non-acknowledgement of Israel's existence is not simply a matter of semantics. Arab maps do not show Israel, but a vast area, including Jordan, labeled as "Palestine". Cities such as Tel Aviv and Haifa simply don't exist. Arab school children, though imbued from earliest age with hatred of the Jews, have no "official" knowledge of the existence of Israel. They learn about it, one supposes, just as they learn about sex, by whispered comments in the schoolyard. Schedules of foreign airlines that show Israel on their route maps or that list Israeli destinations are not allowed in the countries. Foreign publications (among them, one regrets to report, such U.S. magazines as *Time* and *Newsweek*) print special editions for the Arab countries, since no publication carrying advertising of Israeli firms may appear in those countries. And, of course, tourists of any nationality may not enter most Arab countries if their passports shows evidence that the holder has ever visited Israel, the "non-existent country". Not too many months ago, a U.S. Senator was barred from entering Saudi Arabia, our "faithful ally", because of an Israeli visa stamp that had been placed in his diplomatic passport.

■ As an inducement to Israel for yielding land that is absolutely indispensable for the country's defense, the Arabs now and then offer the possibility of the "recognition" of Israel's existence. The sad and almost incomprehensible aspect of that is that many well-meaning people in the U.S., in other countries, and, yes, even in Israel believe that this might be an acceptable bargain for Israel. But Israel's existence is in no way dependent on the recognition of any Arab state. It's simple: Israel exists because it exists. Therefore, supposing that any meaningful face-to-face meetings came about and if, say, a Syrian diplomat should ask Israel what it would be prepared to "give" if Syria would consider acknowledging Israel's existence, Israel should reply that Israel might in turn consider acknowledging *Syria's* existence. Or, Israel could declare a boycott of the Arab world and could offer to relax or to rescind such boycott in consideration of parallel gestures by the Arabs.

The bizarre concept of Israel's "non-existence" has been around for over forty years. Many good people, including quite a few in Israel itself, have been led to believe that Israel should bring substantial sacrifices, even to the point of imperiling its own security and survival, in order to get the Arabs to acknowledge Israel's existence. It is often said that Israel needs to be "recognized" by the Arabs in order to "normalize her condition". But need not the Arabs, too, live in "normalized conditions"? And Israel is often promised that, in return for yielding vital strategic territory to the Arabs, she would be assured of "safe and secure borders". But don't the Arabs also need borders that are safe and secure? The Arab countries and much of the world have come to believe that peace is only good and desirable for Israel. But it is surely at least as important for the Arabs, who have lived through and have been bloodily defeated in five wars with Israel – the "non-existent country". Peace and prosperity can and will come to this troubled region only when the Arabs accept the reality of Israel's existence and negotiate with her openly and in good faith.

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Volume 25 Number 2, February 1992
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The American Spectator (ISSN 0148-8414 is published monthly at 2020 N. 14th Street, Suite 750, Arlington, Virginia 22216. Second class postage paid at Arlington, Virginia, and additional mailing offices. One-year subscription is $35. Vol. 25, No. 2. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: The American Spectator, P.O. Box 549, Arlington, Virginia 22216-0549.

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ABOUT THIS MONTH

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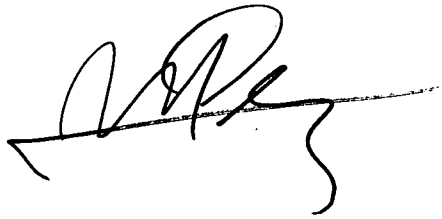
Wladyslaw Pleszczynski

IT WAS FITTING that Mikhail Gorbachev chose December 25 to announce his resignation. As usual, he was playing to a Western audience that doubtless had no idea that the Russian and Ukrainian nations celebrate Christmas Day two weeks later, on January 7. But as was the case for the last seventy-four years, Western admirers of Imperial Russia never bothered to learn more about its various peoples than what the Communist Kremlin deemed permissible. The last straw came when President Bush took Gorbachev's announcement to mean that he too was now free to go on national television and, in his case, to acknowledge the existence of the new Commonwealth of Independent States and recognize the independence of the former Soviet republics. The specter of the democratically elected President of the world's lone superpower taking one final cue from the last Soviet dictator will haunt America for years to come.

OF COURSE, it was all avoidable. For one thing, Bush could have followed the work of Adrian Karatnycky, who in December alone appeared several times on "The MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour" and other news shows to discuss independent Ukraine and the character of President Yeltsin. A year ago, Karatnycky wrote in these pages: "It now appears virtually certain that any Gorbachev-styled union treaty based on a strong central state apparatus will be rejected by the majority of the republics." In the final paragraphs of *The Hidden Nations* (1990), the book he co-wrote with his wife Nadia Diuk, Karatnycky singled out Yeltsin ally Oleg Rumyantsev, who on a visit to the U.S. in July 1990 predicted "that Russia would seek to work out the terms of a future confederation or, more likely, a commonwealth, through multilateral treaties with other sovereign *and democratically elected* republics." In the August 1986 *TAS*, Karatnycky discussed "The Ukrainian Option," noting that "there are practical reasons for the U.S. to take a greater interest in the Ukrainian cause." He also pointed to the moral reason: "As Jeane Kirkpatrick and her staff frequently demonstrated at the U.N., the Ukrainian question can be a powerful reminder of the true nature of Soviet colonial rule." This month, in "Minsk Meet" (page 27), Karatnycky draws on his unique expertise and contacts in the democratic movements of the former Soviet bloc to introduce Europe's two newest democratic and independent entities, Russia and Ukraine. Their emergence will seem less stunning to anyone who's been paying attention.

Till next month,



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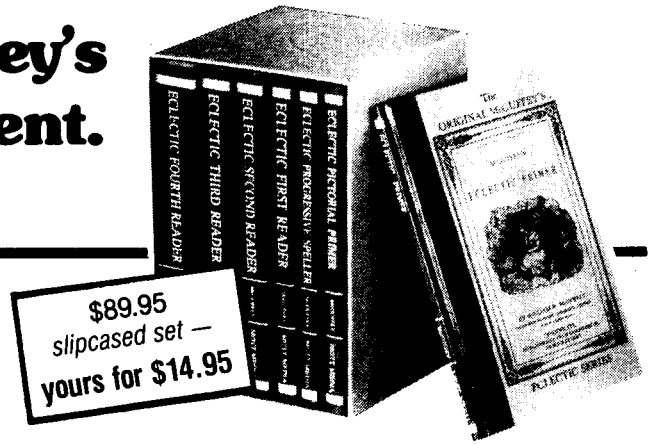

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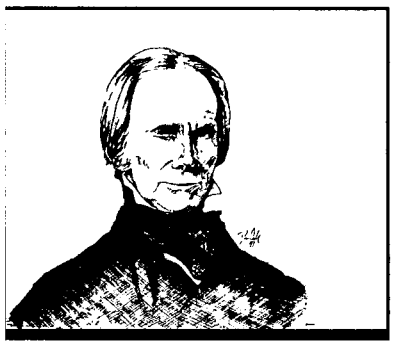

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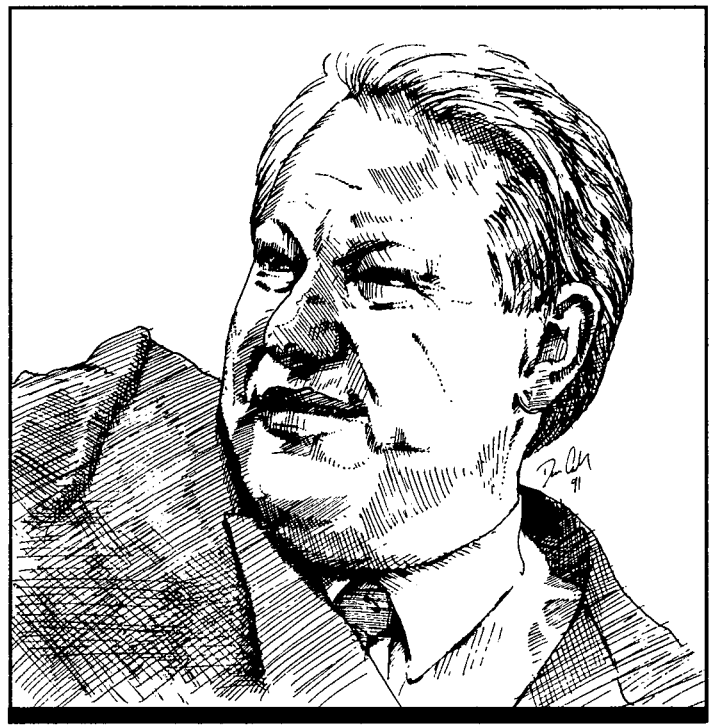

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•December passed, and with it the entire Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—not in a Nuclear Nightmare or an Arctic Winter but in a puff of petulance from the Soviet Union's last tyrant, Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev. Mr. Gorbachev fears for the future of the new Commonwealth of Independent States. So, for that matter, does Secretary of State James Baker. Possibly it is time for Mr. Baker to follow Mr. Gorbachev into retirement. They could found a support group for statesmen suffering from historiophobia.

•Also passing from the scene in December were Professor George Stigler, the Nobel Prize–winning free-market economist, and Warren Brookes, one of the country's finest syndicated columnists. Mr. Brookes was a friend and a contributor, and his passing is a special loss to this magazine. Crusty, fiercely independent, and driven as much by conscience as by brains, he was a man of unforgettable humanity and a treasure to friends of freedom from the day he began his extraordinary journalistic career in 1975 to the day he tapped out his last lines, just hours before his death from pneumonia.

•In sporting news, Tokyo's Mr. Tatsuro Murano captured that exotic city's eleventh annual "Year-End Shouting Contest" when he exploded with a scream reaching 117.6 decibels and outhollered nineteen other potential prime ministers. In Paris, the effeteness of French socialists was amusingly demonstrated when Interior Minister Philippe Marchand banned dwarf-tossing, describing the manly sport with this effeminate sob: "It is an intolerable attack on human dignity." Michigan's Mr. Desmond Howard, weighing 176 pounds and standing five feet nine inches tall, won the Heisman Trophy; and prospects for a happy 1992 Olympiad in Barcelona were obnubilated when Haitian-born medical doctor Alfonso Arcelin stumbled over "El Negro"—a stuffed and mounted chief of the Bechuana people of southern Africa—during a visit to Banyoles, the small town in the Pyrenees foothills that is scheduled to be the scene of this summer's Olympic rowing competition. No damage was done to the late Mr. El Negro, but Dr. Arcelin has concluded that the display is "racist and dehumanizing," and he did look rather silly and dehumanized groping around on the floor with a half-clothed corpse. So now he threatens to lead an African boycott of the entire Olympiad unless Spaniards do the right thing by "El Negro."

•Feminist theoreticians and members of the animal rights movement who argue that men should more abundantly express their feelings were given cause to ponder their dubious premise when Mr. Kao Khae Saeohan, 26, of Sacramento, California, became hysterical and repeatedly walloped his wife with a frozen squirrel. And how about the picaresque Mr. Dennis Anthony Zoppa of Ocean City, New Jersey, whom police arrested after discovering $5,000 worth of lingerie in his station wagon? Beneath his business suit Mr. Zoppa was wearing a bra, panties, a garter belt, and a negligée. (Who ever heard of wearing a negligée under a business suit?) Centerville, Maryland, police have charged the New Jersey free spirit with theft and two counts of being a rogue and a vagabond. Mr. John Sununu resigned as White House chief of staff on December 3. Investigators in Europe and North America began scrutinizing the bankrupt financial empire of the late socialist wizard Robert Maxwell, after it was divulged in Britain's *Sunday Express* that the sticky-fingered world-saver had even withheld funds raised through his newspapers for Mother Teresa, who once thought Mr. Maxwell "quite a guy."

•The national trend of older women marrying younger men received a stupendous boost on December 28 when the celebrated actress and comedienne, Miss Martha Raye, 75, married Mr. Mark Harris, 42. The trend first attracted national attention early in the month on the "Donahue" show. There Mr. Phil Donahue, "the Moral Bladder of this Nation," interviewed a similar couple, Mrs. Shirley Davis, 44, and her newly-wed husband, Mr. Jonathan Lee Davis, 14, of Gadsden, Alabama, about the iniquities endured in Amerika by such brave, pioneering couples, for instance the difficulties that they have experienced in trying to break into the Gadsden upper crust. After living together for months in a mobile home—where, the *Birmingham Post-Herald* writes, they consumed bowls of ketchup, potato chips, and an occasional case of beer—the Davises entered holy wedlock last spring. According to the *Post-Herald*, the pace-setting couple did not engage in sexual congress "until their wedding night, spent in a storage room where Shirley had left some of her belongings."

•Islamic kidnappers released all remaining Americans and the bodies of two whom they had murdered. In Orlando, Florida, police spotted nearly a hundred people fleeing from that city's Club Space Fish Cafe, where the exciting punk-rock group, GG and the Murder Junkies, was performing its new gig incorporating an intricately choreographed melange of urination, defecation, self-mutilation, and blatant nudity. The music was only so-so, but the performance would surely have attracted the kind of critical praise that nowadays fetches grants from the National Endowment for the Arts if only the group had been able to prolong the urinating and defecating, say by contracting stomach flu. With his usual intellectual resourcefulness, the agile arts chairman, Mr. John Frohnmayer, might prevail on the Centers for Disease Control to provide GG and the Murder Junkies with all the bacteria and viruses necessary to enhance future performances. It would be a savings for taxpayers worth bragging about during the forthcoming presidential campaign. President Bush's approval rating slipped to new lows, according to a CBS-*New York Times* poll.

•Pan-American World Airways went belly up, and in Bangalore, India, Mr. Hanumantha Lamani, 30, was arrested for fatally shooting an unnamed man he mistook for a wild boar. Monkeys went on a rampage in the northeastern Indian state of Assam, attacking government offices and shredding files while police looked on helplessly, restrained as they are by Hindu reverence for the monkeys—and before Americans begin

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to snicker at the Hindu forbearance accorded monkeys let us be mindful of the forebearance we accord our own, most notably those on Capitol Hill. Transportation Secretary Samuel Skinner was named the new White House chief of staff by President Bush.

•At the Palm Beach rape trial of Mr. William (Willie) Kennedy Smith, the accused was acquitted on all charges, despite his shocking admission that on the night of his famous tryst he had carried no condoms. It was a big month for condoms. In Sarasota, Florida, Schmid Laboratories unveiled the nation's first youth condom at a memorable press conference during which Mr. Barry Miller, Schmid's incomparable vice president of marketing, announced, "We cannot just bury our heads in the sand." In Washington, the Agency for International Development suspended distribution of 50 million condoms to Egypt after discovering that unscrupulous Egyptian birth control agencies were allowing the prophylactics to slip into the hands of balloon vendors. Finally, after years of research, a British company has announced the world's first "female condom." For added protection a wetsuit can be worn.

•Mr. Jerry Lee Robertson and his wife were charged with murder and theft for allegedly beating their roommate to death with a clawhammer following an acrimonious game of Monopoly. Mr. Charles Keating, Jr. faces up to 510 years in prison after being convicted on seventeen counts of securities fraud, presumably making him ineligible for parole until he is 180 years old. Taking into account the cost of incarcerating him and of maintaining his Social Security benefits, Washington insiders are predicting a reduced sentence. In Virginia, a Loudoun County teenager, Mr. Joshua E. Tulip, has been sentenced for the shooting death of his mother and the wounding of his father. Mr. Tulip was sentenced by Circuit Court Judge Thomas D. Horne to twenty years, with ten years suspended, making him eligible for parole in 1993. Judge Horne acknowledged the obvious when he said to young Tulip: "You obviously have a great deal of love and devotion to your family."

•Christmas was observed all over the world: in the former Soviet Union, in all the former satellites of Eastern Europe, in Berkeley, California, at Harvard Yard, in the London boroughs of Islington and Camden, and in the Transylvanian town of Cluj, where Mr. Ion Enescu, a local pig farmer, was hospitalized for three days when his Christmas pig exploded during depiliation.

—RET

CORRESPONDENCE

A Fishing Expedition

Parliament of Whores, by P.J. O'Rourke, page 5: "Sure, if we own an aerospace contracting company, a five-thousand-acre sugar-beet farm or a savings and loan with the president's son on the board of directors, we can soak Uncle Sucker for millions."

Ibid., page 28: "So Mike [Dukakis] went with the high-concept ticket-balancing choice of Lloyd Bentsen, who was two hundred fifty years old and a little to the right of Albert Speer. Actually, Dukakis wanted a Texan who was slightly more liberal, but George Bush was busy."

Ibid., page 31: "If you voted for Bush, you'd be robbed blind. If you voted for Dukakis, you'd be too poor to be worth robbing. Besides, there was no telling what either of these ballot mice would actually do in office. Bush and Dukakis told us exactly where they stood on only one issue—they were both in favor of getting elected. . . .

"How, in God's name, did we wind up with these two quibbledicks vying for helicopter rides on the South Lawn? . . .

"No Miss Texas ever had a voice as grating or diction as tangled as George Bush."

Ibid., page 38: "First the jerk disappeared—the tall schmo with the voice up his nose, the one who was running for president but no one could figure out why because he kept getting his tongue in a clove hitch and calling every whatchamajigger a "thing." . . . You'll remember that until the beginning of January 1989 George Bush was a skinny, inconsequential doofus, an intellectual smurf and moral no-show who wound up in the White House by default."

Ibid., page 103: "Now for revenues. I am a real Republican (unlike some current presidents I could name), so I won't raise taxes."

The American Spectator (December 1991), page 13: One of Marlin Fitzwater's recommended "Books for Christmas" is *Parliament of Whores*—"because it's fun and it's *all true*."

Marlin, President Bush is going to confiscate your typewriter . . .

—Ermin D. Narehood
Manchester, Pennsylvania

Woodrowkind

I found Paul Johnson's review of August Heckscher's *Woodrow Wilson* (*TAS*, November 1991) interesting, thought-provoking, lengthy, and possibly misleading in one respect. For the sake of historical accuracy I must share illumination concerning Wilson's early reading progress. Reporting that Wilson "did not learn to read until he was nine," Johnson goes on to say that "Heckscher thinks he may have been dyslexic. More likely he was lazy and unmotivated."

Wilson was neither. It is correct to say that he did not learn to read until he was nine years old. But the truth of the matter is that Wilson did not *begin* school until he was nine because the Civil War had closed many of the schools.

Lazy? Hardly. By the time he was ten he had written a constitution for a neighborhood club. Rules of strict parliamentary procedure governed all debates of the club members. As early biographer Ray Stannard Baker noted in *Woodrow Wilson, Life and Letters: Youth, 1856-1890* (1927), Wilson "was no casual reader but one of the eager and passionate kind who is not content until he tears out the very heart of a book. . . . When the boy read Cooper's novels, he wished afterwards to act them

Department of Corrections

Owing to an editing botch, two errors crept into Avigdor Haselkorn's "A New Balance of Terror" in last month's issue: The Joint Chiefs of Staff study mentioned on page 48 was done in the aftermath of the Six-Day War, not the Yom Kippur War; the Syrian missiles referred to on page 49 are surface-to-surface, not surface-to-air. We apologize to Mr. Haselkorn and our readers.

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out; when he read sea stories, he made pictures of the ships described; and he was not content with Scott's romances until he had found someone . . . with whom he could discuss the characters and incidents."

I am disappointed to find that Heckscher has joined those who quote the litany of "dyslexia notables" (e.g., Wilson, as well as Thomas A. Edison, Albert Einstein, Winston Churchill, George S. Patton, Jr., Hans Christian Andersen, Leonardo da Vinci), purported to have had academic problems while young and thus *assumed* to be dyslexic. At least Johnson did not accept that—though he implies Wilson was lazy—but author Heckscher apparently does.

This kind of ill-founded assumption is a serious disservice to those who have dyslexia. They (or their parents) may assume that since all those notable people had dyslexia and became famous for their accomplishments in spite of it, there is no need for remediation (since obviously those people had none).

On the contrary, we should be getting out the message that dyslexia is something that can be alleviated, but it takes a lot of hard work by appropriately trained persons. At the same time, there are many reasons why a child may have difficulties in school—other than dyslexia. The two must not be equated.

–Anne Marshall Huston
(Author of Common Sense About Dyslexia *and* Understanding Dyslexia)
Professor of Education
Lynchburg College
Lynchburg, Virginia

Teacher of the Year

I offer two sincere hopes for the brave Nina Nilson ("The Class of '96," *TAS*, November 1991); that:

(1) she's in touch with a good résumé service, as it's a safe bet her colleagues and supervisors will do all within their power to see that she's severed from her job in view of her going public with such a devastating article.

(2) by some miracle said co-workers and bosses simply miss seeing the November issue of *TAS*, which isn't wildly unlikely, since public school educators are about 95 percent liberal and probably have never even heard of the magazine.

I'm assuming, of course, that she wasn't planning to resign anyway, for which I wouldn't blame her, being myself a former substitute teacher in the Pittsburgh junior and senior high schools. (As Ms. Nilson would attest, I'm sure, the "subs" often have it worse than the regulars, since even the most obtuse among the troublemakers know that only the regular teachers can affect their grades.)

On a wider level, I'm afraid the crisis Ms. Nilson describes is doomed to continue, until and unless those responsible for such schools face head-on that the crux of the problem is a growing cohort of youngsters, most of whom have never known a father and lack any sense of moral compass in their lives. For starters, those who should know better have got to stop dodging the issue by chanting like a mantra such gibberish as "structural racism" and "oppressive power structure." The longer this kind of silly posturing goes on, the more good teachers like Ms. Nilson will simply throw up their hands and walk away.

–O. M. Ostlund, Jr.
State College, Pennsylvania

Not My Department

I saw your Library Watch ad in the December 1991 issue of *TAS*. Not only did it seem very self-serving and self-aggrandizing, but out of touch with the reality of library funding these days. Perhaps with today's tight fiscal restraints on libraries it would be more helpful to suggest that people donate library subscriptions to their public libraries.

–Janet Larson
Assistant Library Director
Sacramento Public Library
Sacramento, California

More Motown

I was pleased to see William Irvine's article, "Forget the Motor City" (*TAS*, December 1991), though I wish he would have spent more time in the beloved city of Detroit to truly get a feel for Motown. Better than any other single anecdote that sums up the city of Detroit is the one my younger brother, Eric, often recounts. While traveling to Detroit from New York, he was asked by a fellow passenger where he was from. Eric, like any confident 17-year-old relishing an opportunity to defend America's most maligned city, responded "Detroit"—despite having lived in Manhattan since the age of four. The other passenger in return disarmingly queried—"Why?" . . .

–Adam J. Levinson
Ithaca, New York

Holy Russia

I very much enjoyed reading Tom Bethell's "A Chat With Irving Kristol" in your December issue. Mr. Kristol's opinions are almost always instructive; and he sets an admirable example of intellectual courage and honesty.

One remark he makes is worth a brief comment, not so much by way of criticism but clarification. Commenting on Russia, Mr. Kristol says, "I think Russia is going to become a very religious country." Russia already is a very religious country, and has been for over one thousand years. Orthodox Christianity was established in Russia in 988 A.D., nearly a century before the Great Schism, when the Church of Rome separated itself from the rest of Christianity; which is to say that Russia has been a Christian nation longer than the Roman Catholic Church has existed.

Orthodox Christianity has sustained Russia through times of great persecution, beginning in 1237 A.D., with the invasion of Russia by the Mongol Tartars. The Mongols, however, were nothing compared to the Communists. The former, for the most part, did not interfere with the life of the Church, but the Communists were in principle dedicated to an aggressive and militant atheism. It is estimated that between 1918 and 1926 as many as a hundred bishops were executed by the Bolsheviks, as well as some 2,700 priests, 2,000 monks, and 3,400 nuns. Some expatriate writers estimate that at least 12,000 priests have died at the hands of the Communists.

In some cases, to be sure, Russian hierarchs capitulated to Communist propaganda, because of fear or torture; but the Orthodox Church survived, and nourished the spiritual lives of the faithful. Even before the advent of glasnost and perestroika, some writers estimated that, after decades of Communist rule, church attendance in Russia was higher than in many countries of Western Europe.

Orthodox Christians in Russia have retained the faith expressed by Patriarch Tikhon, when he excommunicated the Bolsheviks: "We firmly believe that the enemies of the Church of Christ will be broken and scattered by the power of the Cross, for the promise of Him who bore the Cross is unalterable: *I will build my Church and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it"* (Matthew xvi, 18).

We may recall the saying of Aeschylus, that wisdom comes from suffering. For the most part, Christianity in the West has been fortunate to escape the sufferings that have been an almost constant element in the life of the Orthodox Church in the East; but occidental Christians, given the deep spiritual crisis in the West, could learn from the wisdom of Russian Orthodoxy.

–Scott R. Stripling
North Andover, Massachusetts

A Shrinking World Economy

You just know you're in a recession when Arab terrorists start laying off hostages.

–Michael Brunka
Toronto, Ontario

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R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

Stone Dead

It is only right that someone step forward to serve the needs of this country's ignoramuses. We have built vast libraries and schools for those who want to know what's what. We have trained teachers and scholars to dispense knowledge. But we have done very little for those who do not want to know the truth, who find the requisite thinking painful and the facts inscrutable. Something has to be done for the meatheads.

The great philanthropist Andrew Carnegie built libraries for those who would seek the truth, but it is only now that a great American has come forward to serve the ignoramuses. The philanthropist's name is Oliver Stone, and, whether history eventually ranks him with Carnegie or not, let us thank him for giving the stupid among us something to think they think about. Stone has stepped forward from Hollywood, California, to serve the needs of those neglected Americans who have no minds.

Stone gave us a fantasy about the war in Vietnam entitled *Platoon*. He gave us a fantasy about capitalism entitled *Wall Street*. Now he gives us a fantasy about the assassination of John F. Kennedy entitled *JFK*, exploiting the murdered President's name. All of these movies are made for those dolts who cannot remember the facts, and so Stone's message is a soothing one, to wit, that the facts do not matter. They have all been falsified by conspirators, hordes of conspirators. Just remember the fantasy, and maybe two or three facts. In the movie *JFK*, it is a fact that the President died, his brother died, and Martin Luther King, Jr. died. *Ipso facto*, Stone attests, the deaths were "all linked."

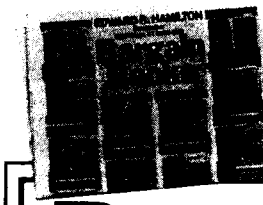
Well, there is no arguing with an ignoramus (and, incidentally, to watch Stone fantasize in a CBS interview and on the op-ed page of the *New York Times,* it appears that he is pretty much an ignoramus, too). The ignoramus is too benighted to understand simple fact, orderly thought, or the rules of evidence. In *JFK*, Stone, a practiced dope-fetcher, tells the dopes that President Kennedy was the victim of a conspiracy that included a group of New Orleans homosexuals, Cuban exiles, the FBI, the CIA, the American military, and the martyred President's successor, Lyndon Baines Johnson. Stone believes such enormities cry out for renewed investigation, though, given all the conspirators in the land, I cannot imagine whom Stone would trust to conduct it.

Stone claims that all he wants is to open sealed records of the House committee that investigated the assassination in the 1970s. It challenged the notion that only one gunman fired, but otherwise pretty much endorsed the Warren Commission's findings. Mr. Stone, if you will allow me, I fear you are just skimming the surface of our national evil when you make such a milquetoast recommendation. Any committee so soft on the Warren Commission is obviously part of the conspiracy, and, anyway, you and your meatheads are already convinced that there was a conspiracy to kill the Kennedys and Dr. King. Now you should be urging an investigation into the coverup!

True, the leader of the coverup, Lyndon Johnson, is dead. Or at least he is reportedly dead. (You might want to investigate this, too. It is hard to believe as powerful a man as Johnson would just up and die.) But many of Johnson's aides are still around, for instance former attorney general Nicholas Katzenbach; former secretary of defense Robert McNamara; and former Sancho Panza to President Johnson, Bill Moyers. And where has former secretary of state Dean Rusk been all these years? An investigation is in order.

Let us have an independent counsel (won't Lawrence Walsh have time on his hands soon?) subpoena Johnson's aides and have them testify as to what they saw in those dark days of the 1960s. If Pentagon generals plotted to thwart the good President Kennedy's attempts to end the Vietnam war, McNamara is the man to ask—and is it not interesting that he served both Kennedy and Johnson? Then there is Bill Moyers. He was Johnson's shadow. What

Adapted from RET's weekly Washington Times *column syndicated by King Features.*



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did he know about the coverup, and when did he know it? Scores of other Johnson aides are all over Washington. An energetic independent counsel could surely dig up the dirt.

Getting the government to act is going to necessitate a massive public relations campaign. Fortunately, Mr. Stone loves this country. Surely, he will make available all profits from *JFK* for the campaign ahead. Every meathead in his audience believes as much. ❐

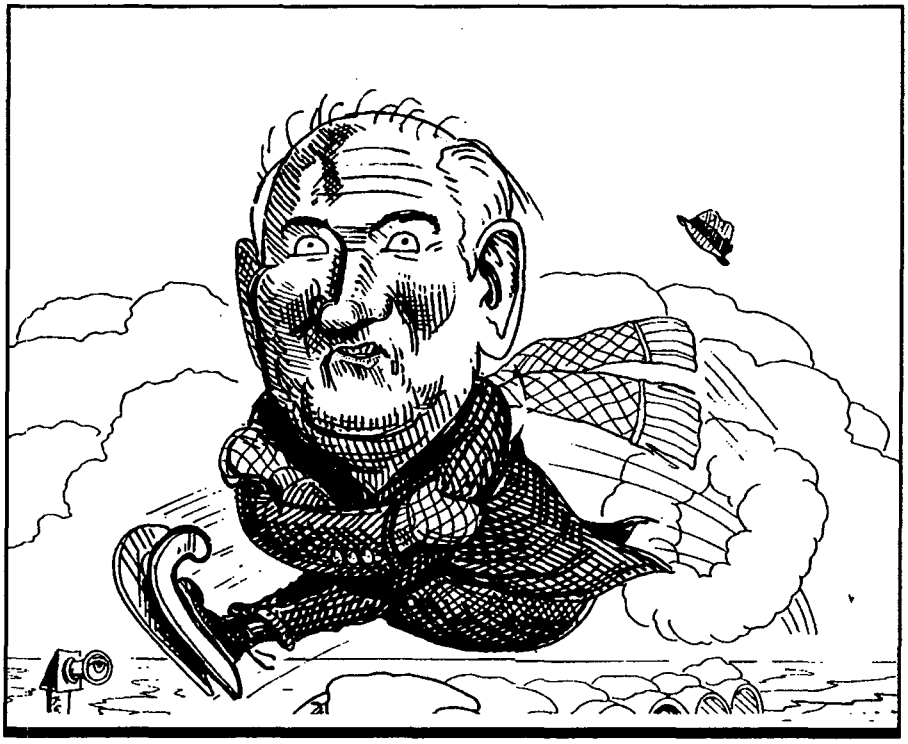
The Great Bungler

Observe the slightly crumpled and uniquely contemptuous figure of the Hon. Mikhail Gorbachev. As world leaders go, his kind has never been seen before: by turns haughty and indecisive, he has been dictator of an imploding dictatorship, generalissimo of a dissolving war machine, and in the end president of a nonexistent country.

During his seven-year rule he sent his armies out to crush liberty . . . and he drew them back. He let his thugs ambush young men in the Baltics . . . and he drew them back. He bloviated about reviving his economy with "socialist markets" . . . but he only bloviated, and the economy steadily collapsed. That such a unique bungler would so awe the world suggests that our time, too, is unique. Many of its greatest figures and most passionately discussed issues have no substance at all outside of the TV studio of their birth.

Mikhail Gorbachev is the only dictator in the history of the world to send his country goose-stepping into the dark. He is the only reformer in the history of the world to propound change from something to nothing. He won the Nobel prize and he will win further prizes. He will go down as a giant, not because he succeeded but because he failed repeatedly. In his repeated failures he made the world a better place. I can think of no national leader quite like him—not Mussolini, not Jimmy Carter, not even one of the fat French or Spanish Bourbons.

He came to power with a problem: his chief constituents, the military and the KGB, were having dreadful trouble stealing from the West, and what technology they could steal they could only with the utmost difficulty use. The Soviet economy was not up to modern times. So, with no idea of what he was getting into, President Gorbachev promised reform. He came from a closed society that had been walled off from the outside world for over half a century, and he in his ignorance believed that he could have both Communism and a productive economy. He ended up with neither.



It is arguable that, as leader of the now-defunct Soviet Union, he failed at everything he attempted, aside from brushing his teeth three times a day, always wearing a clean shirt, and never failing to tie his shoes in the morning and to come home to the right house at night. He was the only major world leader to endorse Marcos over Corazon Aquino in the Philippines. On the eve of a crucial congressional vote over contra aid, he urged a Sandinista invasion of Honduras. He supported state terrorism that provoked the United States to its first convincing military actions since Vietnam.

Through his every botch he remained confident, never betraying any sign whatsoever that he recognized his error or that he was willing to modify his strategies to better serve liberty. In his attempt to transform the Soviet satellites of Eastern Europe into Gorbachevian regimes he lost every one. He lost the Baltics with erratic policies that saw him one day promising freedom to Lithuania for a ransom of $33 billion, the next day sending in the Red Army, only to withdraw it ignominiously later. Soon all the Baltics were in ferment. His treatment of the ethnic minorities of the USSR was equally catastrophic. He encouraged discord in order to implement the old policy of Divide and Rule, and achieved only unmanageable turbulence.

In his last months he suffered a weird coup and returned without a clue as to how far Russian opinion had moved. Promising a peaceful transition at the end of his idiotic reign, he almost provoked a civil war by denying the republics self-determination and repeatedly changing his plans. Now, heading into retirement, he leaves behind him an amazing thing: Russia shrunken. For nearly a thousand years Russia has increased in size by feasting on its neighbors. Now Russia has receded to dimensions not seen since the twelfth century.

"The danger of civil war—or nuclear war—are [sic] far less today than a couple of years ago, let alone at the beginning of the 1980s," the great Russian dissident Vladimir Bukovsky wrote recently in the *New York Times*. "The demise of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States are the best things that ever happened to us all, East and West, in this century." And we owe much of this to a splendid incompetent. History can be amazing. ❐

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Pat's Answers

by Tom Bethell

One week after announcing his presidential candidacy in New Hampshire, Patrick J. Buchanan held a press conference at the National Press Club in Washington. Standing near the coffee urn was Ralph Z. Hallow, who has been covering the campaign for the *Washington Times*. He said that, on the whole, Buchanan had been given a better reception by the mainstream press than might have been expected. Clearly, the media had been expecting a dull horse race in '92, and may have been grateful to Buchanan for spicing things up. Also, I suggested to Hallow, Buchanan has been around Washington for years and has many friends in the press corps, even among those who disagree with his views.

At the same time, of course, Buchanan has been less than favorably received by many conservatives. A peculiar asymmetry of American politics is that, whereas liberals have no enemies to the left, conservatives have no friends to the right—which helps explain the "conservative crackup" that our editor-in-chief has been documenting for a book to be published this spring by Simon and Schuster. It's fair to say that Buchanan's candidacy has exposed a considerable rift among conservatives—I was about to use the cliché "the conservative movement," but I'm not sure that there is any such thing, and it's certainly not moving anywhere right now.

The most important charges against Buchanan are isolationism and protectionism. Vice President Dan Quayle told the *Washington Post*, "I take strong exception that a conservative foreign policy is one of isolationism, protectionism, 'Fortress America,' 'Come Home America.'" Republican National Committee Chairman Clayton Yeutter has criticized Buchanan's "very protectionist views on trade."

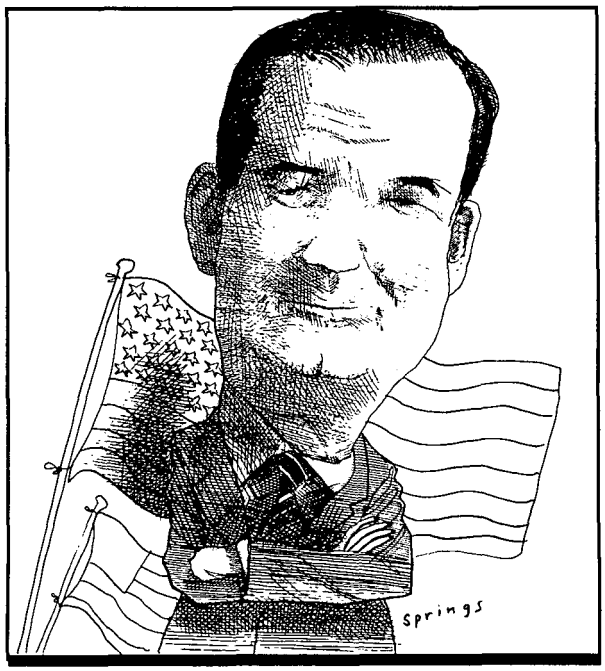
Is Buchanan guilty of these charges? There must have been fifty journalists present when the candidate entered the Press Club ballroom. A dozen TV cameras were rolling, quietly waiting for potential gaffes. Buchanan's opening statement, relevant to the "isolationism" charge, was not mentioned in the papers I saw the next day. His voice had that familiar hoarse, whispery, quality, conveying a sense of fires banked, of indignation controlled, and sometimes, of patience wearing thin:

"Instead of being thirty-seventh in line—as we were in recognizing the republic of Lithuania—the United States should recognize Russia today, and Ukraine today, as free and independent states," he said. "What is President Bush waiting for?" The isolationist seemed to be urging a greater degree of foreign-policy activism upon the President, and he went on to urge the U.S. recognition of Croatia. Referring to "the war of aggression in the Balkans," Buchanan characterized as "shameful" the U.S. "refusal to recognize Croatia, and to give moral support to that beleaguered people. Why is there no room at the inn"—here he looked up at the cameras, the tension increased, the whispery voice hardened—"Why is there no room at the inn of Mr. Bush's New World Order for the infant states of a new Europe, when there is plenty of room for Deng Xiaoping?"

In one of his last columns before launching his run for President, Buchanan asked where the Americans were in the Serbian assault on Croatia—a war neoconservatives have remained remarkably silent about. "Why is the liberation of autocratic Kuwait more important to the West than the liberation of democratic Croatia from Stalinism?" he asked. He concluded by observing that it was time for the Sixth Fleet to show up in Dubrovnik.

A couple of days before Buchanan's press conference, the *Washington Post* published an editorial strenuously opposing Germany's impending recognition of Croatia and Slovenia. "Hands off Yugoslavia" has also been the position of the Bush Administration. Lurking behind feeble calls for more negotiation, more time for the feckless European Community to do something, we see a patent nostalgia for the old Yugoslavia, long regarded by U.S. foreign policy elites as the prize jewel in the Communist bloc. The truth of the matter is that we just can't bear to see it break up, and are nudged with dire warnings of "fascism" if it does.

But the twentieth century's wars, hot and cold, have followed hard on the heels of the unification of many ethnic fragments into new entities, e.g., Germany, Italy, Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union. Ignoring the factitious plan to unify Western Europe, which has proceeded as far as it has only through bureaucratic stealth (and will



Tom Bethell is The American Spectator*'s Washington correspondent.*

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either lead to disaster or, more likely, fall apart when the Germans realize that their government has agreed to give up the Deutschmark), there is today a strong decentralizing tendency in many parts of the world, notably Yugoslavia and (the former) Soviet Union.

Which is to say, there is precisely an *anti*-fascist tendency. It is an absurdity to suggest that the reemergence of small and independent nations with diverse cultures and customs is the harbinger of fascism. In truth, the labels "interventionism" and "isolationism" misrepresent the real foreign policy disagreement between Bush and Buchanan. As Buchanan put it later in the press conference, Bush's so-called New World Order amounts to little more than a sentimental affection for a time when centralization was unquestioned—"the retention of the Old War Order." Buchanan added: "Bush has stayed for too long with Deng Xiaoping—he is not the future. We have stayed with Gorbachev too long—that is not the future. And he has stayed with this crowd in Belgrade—that is not the future."

The Washington establishment has been urging Bush to take up the challenge and attack isolationism. But Buchanan certainly isn't guilty of it. On the other hand, those who think we still need 30,000 troops stationed at the Korean DMZ, and even larger numbers "defending" Western Europe and Japan, should be made to defend their position, which looks nostalgic at best. Even under the leadership of Old World Order enthusiast George Bush, the U.S. is already withdrawing from arenas of conflict once thought important in the Cold War: Zaire, Ethiopia, several other spots. We are retreating from the Philippines—at last. Does anyone now care whether New Zealand excludes U.S. warships with nuclear weapons, or remains in ANZUS? "Board-game" conferences to discuss choke points and sea lanes will become harder to fund, and those who used to attend them will have to find another line of work.

It's worth recalling that the writer who first drew a distinction between liberal internationalism and the national interest was not Pat Buchanan but Irving Kristol, who supported the latter and founded a magazine of that name in the mid-1980s. Shortly before the Gulf conflict, Kristol questioned the time-honored news priorities of the *New York Times* (foreign news before domestic) and proclaimed his indifference to developments in Liberia and Myanmar (Burma). "With the end of the Cold War, an era of foreign policy has come to a close," Kristol wrote. "Reviving the idea of 'national interest' and giving it national substance ought to be at the top of our national agenda." Maybe Pat read that.

Buchanan is much more vulnerable on the issue of protectionism. As he was leaving the room at the end of the press conference, I asked him how he felt about being called a protectionist. "I like Bush calling me that because it gives me a chance to talk," he said. "It's a golden opportunity to respond. It's better than some of the other names I have been called." Later Buchanan called from New Hampshire to discuss the issue further. Within 30 seconds of the appointed hour, the whispery voice was on the line. New Hampshire was "the big roll of the dice," he said. "I think we had a terrific first week."

This time, he did object to the protectionist label. "They are using it as a pejorative term," he said, "to suggest that I am terrified of the United States's inability to trade with the rest of the world. And that's not correct. I am a trade hawk, rather than a protectionist. My objection is to the fact that the only enterprise zone that George Bush has ever created is Mexico. With what he has done with small business, and the rules and regulations and taxes he's imposed on business across the country, he has made it extremely attractive for manufacturers to leave the United States. He is responsible for damaging the competitive position of the United States. My view is the first thing you've got to do is restore that with tax cuts, and the lifting of regulations."

Buchanan said he was "all for" free trade with "a compatible industrial democracy that is dealing with you fair and square, like Britain and Canada." The Germans? "They treat General Motors and Ford fine, we treat them fine." Fine. Buchanan favors "reciprocity"—basically the same message that George Bush and his CEO crew delivered recently to a Japanese audience.

Buchanan differs from protectionist Democrats, who seem to recognize that extracting resources from the productive on behalf of their nonproductive clients can only work if foreign goods are kept out, or kept expensive by tariffs. Congress already imposes over 8,000 such tariffs, as James Bovard details in his book *The Fair Trade Fraud*. And unlike our Regulatory President, ever eager to implement the liberal agenda, Buchanan would halt the punishment of the productive and tell the recipient classes to get to work. He would abolish the capital gains tax, and so on. If he were able to accomplish this, the U.S. would again become hospitable to capital and enterprise, and protectionism would die on the vine.

Still, Buchanan's rhetoric can only encourage others (including Bush) to embrace protectionism, which could lead to a deterioration in world trade. "We are losing jobs across this country because dynamic Asian capitalism is eating our lunch," Buchanan said at his press conference. "And so I'm going to make that an issue." To a Japanese journalist who asked what his policy toward Japan would be, Buchanan responded: "You and I may be friends, but we're not going to tolerate dumping of computer chips, which take out a couple of American industries, and then sudden shortages. . . . This is the kind of stuff that is not going to go on. We're going to play hardball with you. If we think that you folks are going for economic hegemony in the twenty-first century . . . we Americans have not yet begun to fight."

I told Pat that the good news is that the Japanese send us useful things like cars and computers, and are content to accept pieces of paper in return—so what's the problem? He replied: "That's right. And they take these dollars and they're buying up American business and industry." He thinks the Japanese are doing to us what we did to the British in the late nineteenth century. The British practiced free trade, "and the Americans had a high tariff wall and a huge domestic market, honed all our manufacturers and kept foreign goods out, and made American steel and all the rest of it superior." In fact, I think the British decline coincided with the adoption of collectivist legislation and trade unionism and so on, which America remained relatively free of. Today, of course, Japan is less collectivist than the U.S.

Finally, his views on immigration? "You've got to have secure borders," he replied. "Look, we've got laws on the books against illegal immigration, and I would enforce the laws. I think one of the reasons [California Governor] Pete Wilson is having a hard time is a lot of folks come in [illegally], and they're putting their kids in the schools, and the tax burden is rising dramatically. This is a problem for Pete. You notice Pete's toughening up on welfare? And he's also complaining about the illegal immigration."

"The *Wall Street Journal* reported that California Democrats compared Wilson to David Duke and Hitler for saying that he wanted to cut welfare by 25 percent," I said.

"Compared him to Duke and Hitler?" Buchanan said. "Welcome to the club!" ❐

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INTEREST RATE OBSERVER

Vol. 9, No. 21 233 Broadway, New York, New York 10279 (212) 608-7994 NOVEMBER 8, 1991

American yield grope

If R.H. Macy & Co. sold bonds, like Morgan Stanley & Co., instead of form-fitted sheets, its problems would be behind it. If bond mutual funds could be lumped into the national retail sales data along with automobiles and sweatshirts, the recession would be over. Americans want bonds, and they won't settle for Treasury bills, Eurodollar deposits, commercial paper or bankers acceptances.

Last week, the average yield on money-market mutual funds fell to a 14-year low, 5.1%. Fixed-rate mortgages, too, made a 14-year low, 8.8%, and a noted economist declared: "I don't think there's any limit to how low interest rates can go...." In a not-unrelated news item, Fidelity Investments disclosed that it was unable to complete the purchase of $450 million's worth of Ginnie Maes for its hugely popular Spartan Limited Maturity Government Fund.... "The big issue," a man from Fidelity told *The Wall Street Journal*, "is whether we'll be able to continue to invest this enormous cash at reasonable rates."

That is one big issue. The other is whether the yield famine is already ending. Overheated demand for any security is bullish until the day it cools (or until it is met with overheated supply). Does the frenzied character of recent bond buying imply that the end of the rise is closer than the market imagines? Alternatively, are bond yields merely returning—after a long, inflation-induced delay—to the 4% or 5% levels once deemed normal in American finance? Even now, are the bulls on bonds not bullish enough?...

Both extreme positions on the government bond market have their appeal, 4¼% on one side and 9½% on the other (as we'll define them). The extreme bullish position is more familiar because it has been more lucrative. If rates of return on capital are destined to fall, the bulls will say, interest rates should fall in sympathy. Probably, people and businesses will not keep borrowing indefinitely if the incremental interest rate demanded is higher than the expected long-term return. The banking system is impaired, monetary growth is stagnant and deflation weighs on the real-estate market. Interest rates, arguably, should be lower. Emboldening bond buyers is the fact that rates in the not-too-distant past were lower. In living memory, the benchmark long-dated Treasury issue was the 4¼s of 1992. The question is: Are Nicholas Brady and Alan Greenspan 4¼% fellows, or are they 9½% fellows? Given that the dollar floats and sinks according to the whims of the market, are rock-bottom interest rates of gold-standard days obtainable or not?

All of which leads us to the case for higher rates. At this writing, the dollar is under the lash. The decline, although violent, has failed to stir much domestic comment, let alone to change by one visible basis point the direction of Federal Reserve policy. (Under orthodox central-banking rules, a sinking spell in one's currency, let alone in one's international reserve currency, constitutes grounds for raising the bank rate. But these are not orthodox times.) It is true that American policy is parochial, but it is also true that the marginal buyer of American securities is foreign. To propose a theory, foreigners have believed in the dollar because American stocks and bonds have been a one-way street. The direction this year has been up, exclusively. If, as and when the traffic becomes two-way, the dollar may come in for sudden reappraisal, particularly against the deutschemark, which yields more and which stands on a firmer credit footing. (The interest-rate differential is huge: for 90 days, DM-denominated bank deposits earn 9⅜%, dollar-denominated deposits just 5⅛%.) In that case, foreign investors might book passage home. Marginal buyers of dollars and bonds might turn into marginal sellers. Your editor, although a registered Republican, a veteran and patriot, is baffled by the complacency of foreign investors in the face of repeated assurances by senior officials that the Bush administration would turn the dollar into bone meal for the sake of an election.

The recession, currently deemed the creditor's best friend, could also eventually produce higher interest rates. Let it drag on, and the White House might hit the inflation button. Probably, the button would produce no fast relief anyway, as the chain of credit creation is damaged....

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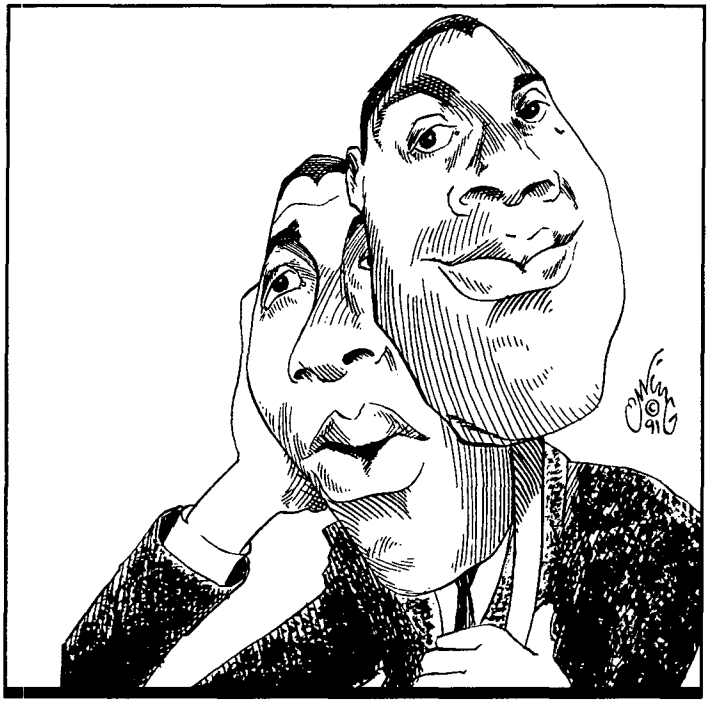
Do You Believe in Magic?

One man's announcement has given new impetus to the AIDS establishment's relentless campaign of distortion.

by Michael Fumento

In 1985, the cover of *Life* warned, "Now, No One Is Safe From AIDS." In 1987, *U.S. News & World Report* told us, "The disease of them is suddenly the disease of us . . . finding fertile growth among heterosexuals." In 1988, the media jumped on a study of infections on U.S. college campuses as "proof" of the long-awaited heterosexual breakout. ABC's "20/20" stated flatly that these were heterosexual infections. (Few reporters pointed out that the percentage of infections was half the rate estimated for the U.S. population as a whole, and that of the thirty infections found, twenty-eight were in men.) In 1990, Cable News Network informed its viewers, "A new report from CDC indicates that AIDS is on the rise on college campuses." The idea was that there had been an increase over the 1988 study. In fact, this *was* the 1988 study—it had taken a medical journal two years to print an article on it, and it was on this that CNN and the AP built their stories. Only with AIDS can an old study be declared an alarming increase over itself.



Could there have been any doubt as to how the media would react when, on November 9, Magic Johnson of the Los Angeles Lakers announced he was HIV-positive? Each year, the press finds something on which to hang its heterosexual AIDS message, to demonstrate that *this year* the wolf really has appeared. Each year it finds a way to use AIDS to sell magazines, newspapers, and shows, and to sell us on the idea that AIDS is a democratic disease that doesn't single out homosexuals and needs an even greater infusion of federal research funds.

This is not the first time the media have attempted to use a single AIDS victim to convince us that we're all at risk. Three years ago it was New Yorker Alison Gertz, who after claiming infection by a bisexual saw

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her face splashed across TV screens, magazine covers, and the pages of the *New York Times*. The problem, however, was that nobody had ever heard of her. Why fuss over one girl if in fact heterosexual transmission is so very common? Needed was somebody already well known.

Someone like John Holmes, the porn king who died of AIDS. Upon his demise, Holmes's wife told reporters that he got AIDS filming a scene for one of his heterosexual movies. Holmes was immediately heralded as the first victim in the long-predicted wave of pestilence that would sweep through the blue-movie business. But it soon came to light not only that Holmes was a drug abuser and a bisexual but that he'd even had sex on screen with a man who later died of AIDS. While there have been many deaths among actors in the homosexual porn industry, Holmes appears to be the only maker of heterosexual porn films to have died of AIDS.

With Magic Johnson, the media and the AIDS activists scored a long-awaited coup. CNN jumped on the Johnson story to proclaim that now "anyone can get AIDS." How curious to be told that, if a man who apparently had thousands of sex partners can get AIDS, we are all at risk. Marilyn Chase, the AIDS crusader at the *Wall Street Journal*, favorably quoted Johnson's remark on the Arsenio Hall show that "to heterosexuals AIDS is coming fast." One L.A. TV station ran five straight nights of specials on the alleged heterosexual AIDS epidemic.

Each year, the press finds something on which to hang its heterosexual AIDS message, to demonstrate that this year *the wolf really has appeared.*

In the wake of his revelation, Johnson found himself in a position that few people, aside from Tom Sawyer or Ernest Hemingway, ever will: he heard his own eulogy, not once but dozens of times. For instance, in the *Chicago Tribune*: "In Magic Johnson, the war against AIDS has a new volunteer, a superb spokesperson, a fresh hope, a peerless teacher, an almost mystic symbol." ("Oy vey!" as my mother would say.) One AIDS activist gave Johnson credit for saving thousands of lives; a caller on Howard Stern's nationwide radio show said Johnson had probably saved *millions* of lives. To hear the media tell it, Johnson's announcement has replaced JFK's assassination as the event people will recall thirty years from now. Johnson's own contribution was to become a modern Nathan Hale, regretting that he has but one immune system to give for his country. "Sure, I was convinced that I would never catch the AIDS virus," he told *Sports Illustrated*, "but if it was going to happen to someone, I'm actually glad it happened to me. I think I can spread the message concerning AIDS better than almost anyone."

Even as some AIDS testing clinics were reporting a tenfold increase in customers, the media opened the AIDS disinformation spigot wider than it's been opened in years. Thus, the *New York Times* on November 18 led its correspondence page with a letter from an AIDS activist headlined: "Women Become Top U.S. AIDS Risk Group." *USA Today* reported a Yale psychologist's finding that "women are 12 times more likely to get AIDS . . ." *USA Today* didn't say what it was doing quoting a psychologist on a question of epidemiology, nor did it say twelve times greater than what; presumably it meant men. One would never know from the *New York Times* or *USA Today* that new male cases of AIDS outnumber female ones by eight to one.

A month before the Johnson press conference, PBS broadcast a show on teens and AIDS full of the usual nonsense that AIDS is exploding among teenagers. (Not only do teenagers have an extremely low rate of diagnosed AIDS cases, but military testing shows they also have a low rate of HIV infection.) The show advised that a single condom can save "hundreds of lives." That would be a hell of a condom, though perhaps I should also mention that one of the show's underwriters was Carter-Wallace, manufacturer of several lines of prophylactics.

As I discuss at length in the December issue of *Commentary*, AIDS is no more running rampant among heterosexuals today than it was when the media first cranked the klaxon in 1985. In fact, since 1989 the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has lowered both its prediction of new cases over the next few years and its estimate of current infections. While most of the media insist on using the old figure of one to 1.5 million current infections, the actual CDC number is one million. Since this figure includes all infections since the beginning of the epidemic, which has seen more than 100,000 Americans die of AIDS, the actual current infection figure is less than 900,000. Infection data collected from military applicants and blood donors continue to show that infections from heterosexual transmission remain extremely low.

The reason there is no heterosexual epidemic and never will be is shown by the so-called partner studies. These are studies of couples in which one member is HIV-positive and the other originally is not, and they reveal that, over a period of years, about 20 percent of all women sleeping with HIV-positive men eventually become positive themselves. The only study of partners in which the woman was already infected indicates that of sixty-one infected women and their seventy-one originally uninfected male partners, only one male ever became infected—in what can only be termed a wild relationship, with over a hundred bouts of penile and vaginal bleeding between them.

Every HIV infection is a personal tragedy, but our concern here is epidemic spread. For an epidemic to spread, each case—be it of influenza, measles, bubonic plague, or HIV—must generate at least one new case. Otherwise, the epidemic will slowly die off with its individual victims.

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Where it takes five old cases to equal one new case, as in male-to-female transmission of HIV, you don't have epidemic spread. Where it requires about fifty old cases to equal one new case, as in female-to-male transmission of HIV, you don't have epidemic spread. Occasional heterosexual cases will make news for the same reason that planes that crash make news while planes that land safely do not. But you can no more get an epidemic out of such low transmission rates than you can get a squirrel on a treadmill to provide New York City's power needs. Any epidemiologist can tell you this, which is why the media circumspectly avoid talking to epidemiologists, preferring instead to rely on AIDS activists. (There are a few exceptions, such as the *New York Times*'s Gina Kolata, who for her troubles has been bitterly attacked by AIDS interest groups, and the *Washington Post*'s Malcolm Gladwell.)

As for the few cases of heterosexually transmitted AIDS that the CDC does list, all that a case in this category means is that the person diagnosed with AIDS *claims* to have contracted it that way. Those carriers who are not heterosexual at all may lie about their risk factors. Nobody claims to be homosexual or a drug abuser who is not, but many who are in these groups are eager not to be identified as such. In short, the number of reported heterosexual cases is not only small to begin with, but probably grossly inflated. A recent CDC re-evaluation of "heterosexual" cases in Florida supports this hypothesis: at least 30 percent belonged in other categories and most of the remaining 70 percent were Haitian, leaving almost no room for native-born heterosexuals.

More white males are diagnosed with breast cancer each year than the number who have been diagnosed with heterosexually transmitted AIDS during the entire epidemic.

In their fury to democratize AIDS, activists and the media insist that heterosexual transmission is now the fastest growing category. In fact, all categories of AIDS transmission are seeing slower growth curves, and some have gone completely flat—with no increase. Because the heterosexual portion of the epidemic lags by a few years, it's always been a few years behind the other categories in flattening out. Heterosexual transmission has *always* been the fastest growing portion of the epidemic, but it's a distinction with no meaning. What is meaningful is that new heterosexual diagnoses, like those in the other categories, come in at slower and slower rates each year.

Yet AIDS the disease (as opposed to AIDS the political entity) makes distinctions based not only on sexual habits but also on race. Just as making AIDS politically correct demands that heterosexuals be put in the same risk category as homosexuals, it also demands that such distinctions be ignored. As I have argued since 1987, to the extent that AIDS is a heterosexual disease it is one not so much of whites, in particular the freshly scrubbed, middle-class whites that the media always depict as the typical AIDS victim, but rather of inner-city blacks and to a lesser extent Hispanics, especially Puerto Ricans. Going by CDC figures of those classified as having contracted the disease through heterosexual intercourse, and assuming black men to be no more or less likely to lie about their risk factors than whites, black men have fifty times the chance of getting AIDS as whites. At the time of Magic Johnson's announcement, the CDC had already listed 3,146 black males as having contracted the disease heterosexually. Black and Hispanic women comprise less than 20 percent of the U.S. female population but comprise three-fourths of female heterosexual transmission cases, thanks to a greater frequency of needle-sharing and sexually transmitted diseases among inner-city blacks and Hispanics. (Diseases such as syphilis and chancroid greatly facilitate transmission of HIV from both men to women and women to men.)

As of October 31, the CDC listed a mere 2,391 white heterosexual transmission cases from a decade-long epidemic. Even on the unlikely assumption that every one of the individuals in question was being truthful about how he or she contracted the disease, that would still be fewer than the number of white heterosexuals who are diagnosed with cancer *each day*. Is it really fair to say that "AIDS is an equal opportunity destroyer" and "We're all at risk" and "AIDS doesn't discriminate"? Or is it more accurate to say that while AIDS should be the concern of all, in the same sense that breast cancer is, that it is nonetheless nonsense to maintain that we are all at equal risk of getting breast cancer? If Magic Johnson had become one of the few hundred American males diagnosed with breast cancer each year, would the media have pretended that breast cancer is a terrible threat to males and patted themselves on the back as men of all ages rushed off to get mammograms? Yet more white males are diagnosed with breast cancer each year than the number who have been diagnosed with heterosexually transmitted AIDS during the entire epidemic. White women, too, have far less chance of getting AIDS through sex than men do of getting breast cancer. Why do the media, the AIDS establishment, and the Public Health Service try to terrify white heterosexuals over AIDS while ignoring male breast cancer?

As a black man, despite his social status and wealth, Johnson would certainly have had more opportunities to have intercourse with inner-city black women than would a promiscuous heterosexual white basketball player. But did Johnson get the disease through heterosexual intercourse? I've delayed raising that question, if only because it is secondary to the larger question of how heterosexuals are faring in the AIDS epidemic. But it is central to any discussion of the media's latest disinformation campaign in the wake of Johnson's disclosure.

For all the talk about the significance of Johnson's having gotten the disease from a woman, few have pointed out that this version of events is based on only one thing: John-

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son's word. Nothing else. Many in the media noted that the Lakers' team physician, Michael Mellman, backed Johnson's claim, saying: "This is a heterosexual individual who was infected through heterosexual activity." But the physician was no less at Johnson's mercy than we are—this wasn't a broken ankle he was describing. The only way he or the legions of reporters or anyone else could possibly know how Johnson got the disease would have been to follow Johnson from bed to bed for roughly the last ten years.

One Santa Monica newspaper, the *Outlook*, even quoted the president of the Phoenix Suns as saying that the NBA had told him that Johnson hadn't contracted the disease from a blood transfusion or homosexual activity and "that leaves only one way—heterosexual activity." Well! If you can't trust official pronouncements of the NBA, who can you trust?

As noted, not telling the truth about risk factors is common among men diagnosed with AIDS. The entertainer Liberace, aware of the tremendous difference between an open secret and just plain being open, denied both his homosexuality and his sickness until he died of AIDS. Dr. Joyce Wallace of the Foundation for Research on Sexually Transmitted Disease in New York once had to interview an HIV-positive man four times before he finally admitted to engaging in receptive anal intercourse. Says Wallace, "In my experience, many men will say they've had sex with a dog before they'll admit to sex with another man."

The New York City Department of Health has noted that the majority of men it interviews who have AIDS and who originally claim prostitute contact as their only risk later admit to homosexuality or drug abuse. Because the department takes lying into account and knows how truly difficult it is for a man to catch this disease from a woman, it has listed only twelve out of the more than 30,000 AIDS cases diagnosed in New York City as verified cases of AIDS passing from female to male through intercourse.

Johnson has greater incentives to lie than other men. He'd be under tremendous pressure from his corporate employers, the Los Angeles Lakers and the image-obsessed National Basketball Association. His endorsement contracts, he says, are worth $12 million a year. He is apparently to receive about $5 million for a second autobiography. If HIV is going to kill Johnson, then Johnson is also going to make a killing off HIV. It's all very understandable. But for him to admit to either homosexuality or drug abuse would wipe out any chance he'll have at being "a spokesman for the HIV virus" (to use his curious locution), destroy the groundswell of sympathy he's received, jeopardize his endorsement contracts and book deal, and shatter his dream of ever owning an NBA team.

While no one doubts Johnson's word that he has slept with many people, there have been rumors for years that he, as Woody Allen would put it, has twice the chance of having a date on Saturday night. The prevalence of the rumor is such that residents of Florida's homosexual enclave on Key West have been spotted wearing T-shirts saying, "I love basketball; I had a Magic Johnson."

Will Johnson be "outed"? Eventually, probably yes, but quite possibly, like Malcolm Forbes, only posthumously. For one, while some homosexuals, such as tennis professional Martina Navratilova, are seething at the attention Johnson has received as a supposed heterosexual, and while it could be argued that it would be good for the cause of homosexual acceptance to establish that a beloved sports hero is "one of us," the better argument is that Johnson at present is far more useful in getting heterosexuals on the AIDS bandwagon. Any individual who tries to come forward is likely to be ignored by the media. The tabloids have already staked out their position that Johnson was incredibly promiscuous but strictly heterosexual, just as prior to Forbes's death they had him ever on the verge of marriage to Liz Taylor.

But what of the mainstream media? After Congressman Stewart McKinney died of AIDS in 1987 and his office said it was from a blood transfusion, a *Washington Post* exposé revealed that he actually frequented the capital's gay bars. That same year, when a Texas minister died of AIDS and his family claimed it came from casual contact in his ministry

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to AIDS victims, a Texas stringer for the *Washington Times* went into the local gay bars and dug up the same story on the preacher. Will we see the same done with Johnson? Again, not while he's alive. Donald Drake, the medical reporter for the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, tried to begin a piece to the effect that, "If Magic Johnson got HIV through heterosexual sex, he either had to have had a lot of partners or was very unlucky, because it's unlikely for heterosexuals to get AIDS that way." *Inquirer* editors ordered the line stricken, for fear it implied that Johnson might have contracted HIV through homosexual intercourse. Johnson's hometown newspaper, the *Los Angeles Times*, is the same paper that covered for Los Angeles Dodgers manager Tommy Lasorda's son when he contracted AIDS, failed to run the cause of death in his obituary, and printed a lengthy interview with Tommy Lasorda about his son in which the cause of death went unmentioned.

I contacted the sports-page assignment editor at the *Los Angeles Times*, Paul Kupper, who confirmed that there had long been rumors of Johnson engaging in homosexual activities. When I asked if the *Times* was going to investigate these rumors, he said he didn't think so. "I don't know what difference it makes. He has it [HIV] and that's all there is to it. What does it matter?" *What does it matter?* It matters because the media have gone crazy ever since Johnson announced he contracted the disease through heterosexual transmission. Because there is a December 9 issue of *Newsweek* with a huge condom packet on the cover. Because HIV testing clinics are splitting at the seams with terrified heterosexuals. "Doesn't the truth have an intrinsic value to it?" I asked Kupper.

"Yes," he answered thoughtfully, but didn't see how that could be relevant to the Johnson story. After all, "heterosexuals do get AIDS, I think that's more important than how he got it." Soon his answers simply shortened to "So what?"

"Aren't you concerned that the national media might seem to think it frightfully important how Johnson got AIDS," I said.

"So what?"

In fairness to Kupper, of course, his position is no different from that of the national media and the AIDS establishment. It is terribly important that Johnson got AIDS from a woman. It is completely unimportant that he may have got it from a man. If Johnson didn't contract AIDS the way he said he did, then he *should have*. And woe to the reporter who tries to take away this generation's answer to Lou Gehrig—even if it could be proved that this Lou Gehrig was knowingly engaging in high risk activity and then callously having sex with countless unsuspecting women. As the sports editor might say, so what? He's still a hero.

Indeed, how many times have we heard what a hero Magic Johnson was for simply announcing that he was infected? Even Vice President Dan Quayle called him a "true champion" for going public. Yet, by Johnson's own admission in *Sports Illustrated*, his teammates were starting to catch on. *People* magazine lauded him as a hero, but noted that the media were on to the story. By holding his press conference, Johnson probably beat the news already in the pipeline by a day, maybe two. Obviously the standards for being a hero have been lowered since the days when it required storming a machine-gun nest or saving a baby from a burning building. Johnson was made a hero simply for contracting the virus, being famous and beloved, and saying it came to him through heterosexual intercourse. For years, AIDS activists had been praying for a famous heterosexual to get AIDS. Many stated so openly. *U.S. News & World Report* said that the AIDS establishment "celebrated" Johnson's announcement. And so it did. "This is a big breakthrough," stated one AIDS leader.

The same day the Los Angeles Times *carried a front-page story about Johnson being used for AIDS fund-raising, it carried several stories describing promising advances in cancer therapy that are being held up for lack of funds.*

Why this need for a heterosexual poster boy? In part to destigmatize the disease. When Lambda Legal Defense Fund Executive Director Tom Stoddard appeared opposite me on "Crossfire" and co-host Pat Buchanan asked him about the role of anal sex in AIDS, Stoddard only replied that anal sex didn't "define" homosexuality, that homosexuals are defined by the love and care they have for each other. But homosexuals don't comprise the majority of AIDS cases because they love and care for each other, they do so because they engage in lots of anal sex with lots of people. The more one concentrates on heterosexual HIV transmission, the more the mind's eye is pulled away from that unhappy fact.

The other payoff is money. When Johnson uttered that magical denial of risk factors he became a cash cow for AIDS activists. Purses long held open to AIDS were quickly stretched even wider at fundraisers nationwide, and there was talk on the floor of Congress about a further increase in AIDS spending.

"Now everybody knows someone who is HIV-positive," says a spokesman for AIDS Project, Los Angeles, in a variation on activists' long-standing warning that someday we'll all know someone with AIDS. Well, I'm sorry, but I don't know Magic Johnson. I never even saw him play ball. I do, however, know Mrs. M., the mother of a close friend. When Mrs. M. dies, there'll be no publicity in the newspaper, though she is loved by all lucky enough to know her. Two Christmases ago, as we sat around the dinner table, she informed us that she used to believe that she could not get AIDS but that, "Now I know anyone can get it, including me." The poor woman assuredly had

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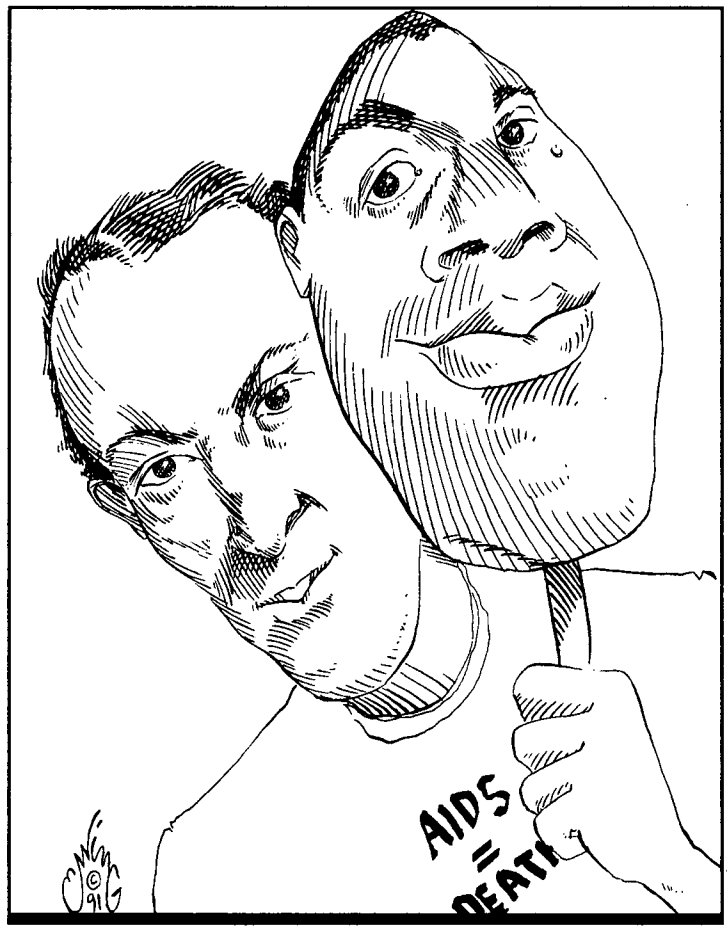
been chaste for the last twenty years and she used needles only for sewing. But the AIDS establishment had succeeded in getting its message to her. Little did we know that while she sat worrying about AIDS, cancer was festering in her body. She is now fighting for her life, living, as she says, "day by day." If a cancer breakthrough comes along in the next year or so, she may live.

Readers won't know Mrs. M., but have we already forgotten the recent death of actor and director Michael Landon, at the age of 54, of a form of cancer that is as relentlessly fatal as AIDS? In a matter of months, he went from apparent complete health to death. A few days later, the actress Lee Remick died of cancer at 55. Not long ago, the actress Jill Ireland died of breast cancer, of which more people will die this year than will be diagnosed with AIDS.

Ironically, the same day the *Los Angeles Times* carried a front-page story about Johnson being used for AIDS fund-raising, it carried several stories describing promising advances in cancer therapy that are being held up for lack of funds. In real terms, cancer spending in 1991 was well below the 1980 level, and that *includes* the quarter of the cancer budget that actually goes to AIDS research.



The disparity in treatment, however, goes well beyond federal funds for research and education. In the U.S., a person who doesn't qualify for Medicare or Medicaid but can show that he's too poor to afford AZT or DDI can receive them free. These drugs, at best, will delay death from AIDS by a year or two. Someone in the same economic position suffering from cancer or heart disease will not have access to drugs that could save his life. The same holds true for diabetics, victims of muscle diseases, you name it. (Other than AIDS victims, exception is made only for kidney patients requiring renal dialysis.) A few days after Johnson's announcement, the state of California, in an apparent effort to placate a gay lobby furious at Governor Pete Wilson for vetoing a homosexual rights measure, made no less than eleven drugs available free of charge to qualified AIDS patients. The state offers no comparable services to victims of any other disease.

Even without Magic Johnson's help, the deception practiced by the AIDS establishment would have continued. Indeed, it is on the verge of accomplishing its greatest feat: it has prevailed upon the CDC to expand the case definition of AIDS, for what will be the third time. The new definition would eliminate symptomatic criteria and rely instead on the number of T-helper cells (a type of white blood cell that HIV destroys) in the blood of an HIV-infected person. One problem is that the T-cell test is notoriously inaccurate, and thus a person with HIV can be declared as having AIDS on three days of the week and not having AIDS on the other four. Another is that AIDS will lose all its meaning as the end-stage of HIV disease, in that there will be people diagnosed with AIDS who have never shown a single sign of illness, and may not for years. According to some epidemiologists, the new definition could increase new AIDS cases by 200 percent. All the data we have showing the epidemic leveling off will become worthless, and one can already imagine the media's alarums over the "sudden, horrifying increase in AIDS cases," the sort we heard six years ago when the CDC yielded to lobbying pressure to expand the definition of "heterosexual transmission" to include all cases originating in Africa and the Caribbean, heterosexual or otherwise. This time, the victims of the deception are not just the taxpayers but those suffering from all other diseases, who must compete with AIDS for funds and researchers. Finally, early diagnosis will also make it appear that people are living longer with AIDS, for which the medical sector of the AIDS industry will promptly take a deep bow. For these reasons, the Netherlands has already rejected the proposed definition and many top AIDS epidemiologists in that country have expressed horror at the thought of its implementation here.

Magic Johnson's behavior, both prior to and since his revelation, may have been reprehensible. Normally, one man's acting out of pure self-interest would be forgivable—if his behavior had no wider impact. And it is humbling to know that a great athlete has been sentenced to death by a horrible disease. But it is sadder still that the media and the broader AIDS establishment have turned him into a lethal weapon in their ongoing war against reality. ❐

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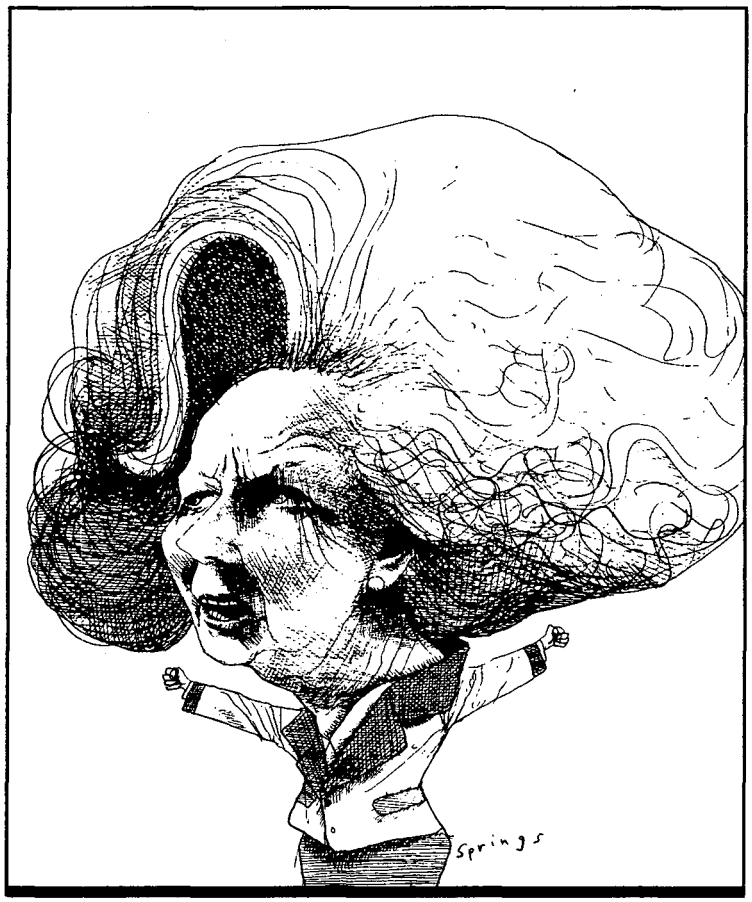
Stuart Reid

Dumping Granny

For all her strength of character, Margaret Thatcher's legacy includes principles betrayed and an expanded welfare state.



London

The earth did not move at Maastricht, but Mrs. Thatcher certainly shifted her ground when John Major returned from the summit to a hero's welcome, the likes of which had not been seen since Robert Maxwell arrived in New York to save the *Daily News*. "I'm absolutely thrilled," said the former prime minister, thus reversing her earlier position of outright hostility to Major and all his works. Quite what had thrilled her was not clear. In the eyes of Euroskeptics (a dwindling band, even on the right), the summit changed nothing. Britain is where she was before the twelve European leaders, their retainers, and their spin-doctors arrived in the Dutch industrial center in December: on course to become part of a loose federation of European states. Only Armageddon or a catastrophic slump can alter what the distinguished conservative commentator Frank Johnson, drawing on the distinguished Democratic commentator John O'Sullivan (1813-1895), now refers to as Britain's manifest destiny.

As expected, the treaty signed by Major allows Britain to opt out of a single European currency, but if, as seems probable, the other eleven members opt in, Britain will surely follow suit. The City of London will see to that. Again as expected, the reference to a "federal goal" was removed from the treaty, at Britain's insistence, to be replaced with the words "an ever-closer union among the peoples of Europe." So what's the difference? Talk of "ever-closer union" is precisely what has been bothering the anti-federalists since Britain entered the Community in 1972.

And yet Mrs. Thatcher professed herself "thrilled." The only remotely thrilling thing Major did at Maastricht was to reject the provisions in the treaty governing workers' rights, which Mrs. Thatcher and others saw as a threat to the labor reforms of the 1980s. Here again, though, the victory may prove empty: as with the single currency, Britain is likely to sign up when the others start implementing common policy on wages, equal opportunity, toilet facilities, and the like. Can it have been, then, that the season of goodwill got the better of Mrs. Thatcher's judgment? Hardly. She has always been a strong believer in keeping religion out of politics. A more convincing explanation for Mrs. Thatcher's U-turn is that her

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advisers had been urging her to lay off the prime minister.

According to a report in the *Sunday Telegraph*, her son, Mark, had asked her friends to persuade "Mumsie" to kiss and make up with Major. Even right-wing Tories were becoming embarrassed by her ill-concealed contempt for the prime minister—earlier in the year she had told a close political ally that "he stands for nothing, he *is* nothing"—and mainstream Tories were frankly disgusted and, more to the point, fearful that her interventions might lose them the election. In the days immediately before Maastricht the Tory press turned on her. What irked the leader writers was that she had called for a referendum on monetary union during November's pre-Maastricht debate in the House of Commons, even though Major was known to oppose a referendum, and she herself had vigorously opposed Labour's 1975 referendum on continued membership in the Community. Furthermore, two days after the debate, in a television interview to mark the first anniversary of her fall, she had described Major's position on a referendum as "arrogant." Arrogant? John Major? The usual Thatcherite jibe is that he is gray, and glad to be gray. At any rate, that did it. The *Daily Telegraph*, once the most Thatcherite of broadsheets, decided to dump granny:

> Throughout this year, there has been a small but vociferous Tory faction which believes that the soul of the Conservative party would profit from a period in Opposition. After Mrs. Thatcher's outbursts . . . the public might be forgiven for supposing that she shares this view. She knew full well that her attack on Mr. Major and his European policy would exacerbate political difficulties. But she went ahead and said her piece anyway. . . . Is it really her wish to see her place in history stained by pettiness, by bitterness, by what the world is liable to perceive as belated barracking from the stalls?

The ultra-Tory *Mail on Sunday* was blunter:

> John Major went out of his way to tailor his speech in the Commons to meet her worries [over federalism]. He was rewarded with as unprincipled a kick in the teeth as any politician has ever received in this country. . . . Let the people speak, she cried. But let no one be fooled. This was not the call of a true democrat. This was the caterwauling of someone who has lost the argument within her own party.

Less measured comment was to be heard in the corridors of Westminster and in every saloon bar and bingo hall in the land. The Tory backbencher Hugh Dykes said what was on many minds: "She seems finally to have flipped."

If Maastricht does not signal the end of the federal

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dream, it almost certainly signals the end of Mrs. Thatcher as a political force, at least in this country. The revisionists are booting up their word-processors. Yet Mrs. Thatcher still enjoys a godlike reputation in some quarters. William F. Buckley, Jr., speaking at a glittering social gathering in London toward the end of last year, described her as a "resolute figure, whose devotion to principle is unchallenged because it is, quite simply, unchallengeable." *Unchallengeable?*

What happened to her devotion to principle in the case of Rhodesia? In the spring of 1979, when Rhodesia was still a British colony, the Rhodesian rebel leader Ian Smith had reached an internal settlement by which blacks were given the vote in return for a constitution that entrenched white power. Bishop Abel Muzorewa became prime minister, but the rival nationalist (i.e., terrorist) leaders Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe were excluded from the electoral process. It was a pretty fair deal under difficult circumstances, but it was not acceptable to the Third World, and the civil war was stepped up. Under Foreign Office pressure Mrs. Thatcher agreed that a new settlement, acceptable to the Third World, would have to be imposed on Rhodesia, a settlement that brought the Marxist Robert Mugabe to power. The moderates lost and the terrorists won (as, to be fair to Mrs. Thatcher, African terrorists usually do). Of course, life for the whites under Mugabe has not been that bad. They still have their swimming pools and BMWs. It has not been such fun, however, for the uppity blacks of Nkomo's Matabele tribe.

And what of Hong Kong? If there was an excuse for what happened in Rhodesia—the excuse being that "you can't stop progress"—there was none in the case of Hong Kong. Not even the loony left believes that the People's Republic represents progress. The betrayal of Hong Kong was an act of political cynicism that even the French would have balked at. Britain was under no obligation to hand it over to China: Hong Kong was ceded to Britain in perpetuity; only the mainly rural New Territories, whose lease falls due in 1997, had to be returned. Mrs. Thatcher has since had second thoughts about the deal her foreign minister, Sir Geoffrey Howe, cut with the Chinese in 1984, but it was her first thoughts that mattered, and did the damage. As in Rhodesia, she was influenced by the Foreign Office, but she is a strong-willed woman who surely would not wish us to make excuses on her behalf. She led a party whose fondness for China's "good Communists" matches that of Bush Republicans, and she must take her share of responsibility for what happens when Red China, with its people's courts and execution squads, takes over Hong Kong in 1997.

If Mrs. Thatcher's foreign policy has to be summed up as less than consistently conservative (there was, after all, the Falklands war), at least her social policy can be characterized positively: it was consistently liberal. London is the abortion capital of Europe. Last year women from more than a hundred countries availed themselves of the state-of-the-art facilities in the capital's termination clinics.

Bitter Betrayal

by Andrew Roberts

Historians have not had long to wait for the true story behind the fall of Margaret Thatcher. Since her ouster on November 22, 1990—the anniversary of the Kennedy assassination—there have been five books, a "faction" drama, dozens of TV analyses, and an avalanche of ministers' memoirs so deep that former foreign secretary and chancellor of the exchequer Sir Geoffrey Howe is having trouble finding a publisher for his own.

The sheer volume of reminiscences is hardly surprising, for the coup against Mrs. Thatcher was a unique political event: the only time this century that a peacetime prime minister in good health and whose party commands a substantial majority in the House of Commons has been removed. Explanations have ranged from the wildest of "grassy knoll" conspiracies to the soberest—and dullest—psephology.

Two books recently published in the United Kingdom[1] have captured the imagination of those for whom the overthrow of the most remarkable prime minister since Churchill was a national tragedy on the scale of the fall of Singapore in 1942. We can all remember where we were when we heard the news. (I, for one, cried for the first time since I had been tortured at my private school.) Like Jacobites after the defeat of Bonnie Prince Charlie, many Thatcherites have still not got over the trauma.

The authors of these books are highly respected political journalists, and national figures in their own right. Both display an instinct for British politics born of a profound knowledge of history, a deep understanding of human nature, and a wide network of friendships and contacts with major politicians. When students of the future are given the essay question "Account for the fall of Margaret Thatcher," they will need to do little more than turn to these two books.

Bruce Anderson—called "Brute" as much for his tough physiognomy and harsh tongue as for any pun on his Christian name—is a man of the right. His journalistic enemies—who if they ever held a convention would have to book Wembley Stadium—accuse him of forsaking Mrs. Thatcher and joining John Major's camp with undue haste. In fact, Anderson has been on close terms with Major for many years. The speed with which he attached himself to the chancellor's campaign is more indicative of a keen journalist's sense of where history is being made than of any desire for self-advancement. The result is a superb, if undeniably biased (at one point he writes, "When John Major wins the next

Andrew Roberts is the author of The Holy Fox: A Biography of Lord Halifax, *published in London by Weidenfeld and Nicolson.*

[1] *A Conservative Coup: The Fall of Margaret Thatcher*, by Alan Watkins (Duckworth, 204 pages, £14.99); and *John Major: The Making of a Prime Minister*, by Bruce Anderson (Fourth Estate, 324 pages, £16.99).

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Nothing Mrs. Thatcher did in office curbed the abortion laws, or changed London's grisly reputation. She was a creature of the 1960s.

Abortion was legalized in Britain in 1967 when the Liberal David Steel's private member's bill was passed after an all-night session. Mrs. Thatcher was among those who sat through the night to ensure its safe passage. After campaigning on a traditionalist ticket in 1979, Mrs. Thatcher did support an amendment to the law, in a free vote, but it was undermined by members of her own government, among others, and it failed. That was the only time Mrs. Thatcher was associated with any pro-life attempt to change the law. In 1988 another Liberal, the pro-lifer David Alton, introduced a private member's bill whose purpose was to reduce the upper age limit at which abortions may be performed from twenty-eight weeks to eighteen. The upper limit in Sweden is eighteen weeks; the average upper limit in the European Community is twelve to fourteen weeks. Mr. Alton's proposal was therefore a modest one. Mrs. Thatcher attacked it, however, and argued instead for a limit of twenty-four weeks. The bill had a majority on its second reading but was talked out in a filibuster.

Mrs. Thatcher's record was no more reassuring on embryo experimentation. She introduced the Human Fertilization and Embryology Bill. It was passed in early 1990 on a two-line whip (which means that any government minister who voted against it would have been forced to resign). The new act provides for destructive experiments on embryos. Curiously, there is an abortion clause. It was not in the original draft legislation but was inserted as an amendment, and carried on a free vote, in the hope, apparently, of satisfying MPs who had supported the Alton bill. The new act reduces the upper limit on abortion from twenty-eight weeks to twenty-four (Mrs. Thatcher's preferred limit), but this provision is watered down by so many exclusion clauses that it really imposes no restrictions on abortion, and indeed further liberalizes the law. For example, under the new act abortion is allowed up to birth in the case of handicapped fetuses. The legislation does not define "handicaps," other than to say that they must be serious, but pro-life legal advisers believe that they can be taken to include hare lips and club feet. No doubt if medical science could detect stutterers in the womb, they too could be aborted under the Human Fertilization and Embryology Bill. Save a lot of misunderstanding.

"Unpopular" does not begin to describe what the pro-life lobby thinks of Mrs. Thatcher. "She's a most dreadful woman," says Phyllis Bowman, secretary of the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children. Calling Mrs. Thatcher's record "ghastly," she expresses a preference for Jo Richardson, Labour's spokeswoman on women's rights: "Jo thinks that the unborn child has no rights, but at least she says so." There are Tory MPs who privately share these sentiments. One former minister who fell out with Mrs. Thatcher over abortion described her as a "ratfink."

Yet Mrs. Thatcher's record in this matter is seldom remarked upon here. One reason is that the left-liberals, who

election . . .") inside view of the Major campaign. When, on page 194, he leaves the events of November 1990 and turns to the life of John Major, most people stop reading.

Alan Watkins is a man of the left, but one with as many friends in the Conservative party as in Labour. He believes he has unearthed a conspiracy of momentous proportions. He has proved, using the diaries of an unnamed cabinet minister who is widely suspected to be education secretary Kenneth Clarke, that John Wakeham—a confidant of Mrs. Thatcher and the Tory party's Mr. Fixit—held a secret meeting just prior to the crucial first ballot, at which it was agreed that the Prime Minister "was not going to make it," and should be persuaded not to run again. Wakeham then went on to become her campaign manager, leading Watkins to ask whether he was "the cheer-leader or the undertaker." Of course, in politics—let alone the frenzied hackery of those frantic few days in Westminster—"what-if" meetings take place all the time. Nonetheless, Watkins, who knows all of the principals intimately, makes a strong case for a "betrayal."

Watkins writes felicitously, and treats us to dozens of witty pen portraits. Former trade secretary Nicholas Ridley "smokes cigarettes with dedication, as if engaged in an athletic activity from which he hoped eventually to attain national recognition." Health secretary William Waldegrave has been "educated out of his wits," and of Mrs. Thatcher's opponent Michael Heseltine, Watkins writes: "There is something of the pine-forest about him."

Mrs. Thatcher had her faults. She was a poor judge of people and failed to bolster her position among parliamentary Conservatives with anything like the dedication her opponents have shown. Rather than sack old colleagues who had outstayed their usefulness, she allowed them to linger on, silently loathing her and sharpening their knives. When she should have been in London, canvassing for votes in the first ballot, she characteristically went off to Paris to fulfill Britain's international obligations. Her poll tax was badly timed and too high; the riots it caused in Tunbridge Wells were as unthinkable to the English as a Communist uprising in the Hamptons would be to Americans. Above all, she expected gratitude and support from old friends, forgetting that gratitude is something politicians are constitutionally incapable of showing. Seeing that the Conservatives were eight points behind in the polls, and terrified at the prospect of losing their seats, ungrateful Tories unseated her. Today, a year later and without Mrs. Thatcher, they are eight points behind in the polls.

Both books make exciting, vivid, and profoundly depressing reading. One is left agreeing with Paul Johnson's verdict: that Mrs. Thatcher was simply too good for Britain. A second-division post-imperial power in desperate need of leadership (especially in hacking out a reasonable deal for itself in Europe), Britain dumped the one leader of consequence she had had since World War II. Or, rather, Britain didn't—154 disgruntled, liberal, ungrateful, myopic, or just plain frightened MPs did. It was they, not the British public that gave her three consecutive election victories, who showed a stupendous lack of vision. ❐

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were her noisiest opponents, favor abortion, and therefore do not "challenge" her pro-choice "principles." Another reason is that, even in conservative circles, abortion is not considered "relevant" to the political debate. It is not the sort of thing that polite people discuss, far less agitate about. Mrs. Mary Whitehouse's campaign against dirty language on television got more coverage in the British press than abortion. Bad language is considered a pressing moral issue, because the British find it difficult to distinguish between morality and respectability. Mrs. Thatcher is a respectable woman and is known to admire Mrs. Whitehouse. And yet she seems not to give a . . . what's the word? . . . a *fig* about the fetus. This love of respectability tells us much about British reactions to abortion. Respectable Britons are distressed when an unmarried girl becomes pregnant. It is not right. The neighbors will talk. The tidy, cost-effective—in effect, Thatcherite—solution is to destroy the fetus, give the girl a nice cup of tea, and tell her to get herself fitted with a coil at the local government-subsidized family planning clinic.

Pro-family groups would be less inclined to blame Mrs. Thatcher personally for the moral decline of the country during her premiership had she not gone on at such length about the importance of the family, or "Victorian values," to use her absurd shorthand for rectitude and probity. (Victorian values were the values of the poorhouse, the crossings sweep, and the bordello.) After all, she was merely following the progressive policies of the Labour and Tory parties over the past thirty years. Valerie Riches, director of Family and Youth Concern, puts it this way: "She was no worse than her predecessors; just more hypocritical."

The betrayal of Hong Kong was an act of political cynicism that even the French would have balked at.

She was, however, tougher, or liked to have it believed that she was. She froze child benefits (they have since been unfrozen by Major), as part of her hard-nosed drive to destroy or modify the welfare state. But she did not destroy the welfare state, and did very little to modify it. As she said of the National Health Service, it was "safe with us." Her government greatly increased public spending (by 16 percent in real terms), while pretending to do the opposite. Spending on the NHS increased by 50 percent, up from 4.5 percent of the GDP to almost 5 percent. None of this mollified the underclass, who believed the early Thatcher propaganda that her administration was cutting public spending. Mrs. Thatcher liked to boast about having rolled back the frontiers of the state, especially when she was addressing obtuse foreigners. She was in fact a centralizer, strengthening the power of the state as few before her had done.

Post-Thatcherite conservatives are now beginning, albeit obliquely, to question the Thatcher legend. Michael Harrington (not *that* Michael Harrington), a former *Telegraph* leader writer, challenged it in the *Times Literary Supplement* by putting the revisionist case against Thatcher in words A.J.P. Taylor might have used:

> Far from being anti-European, Thatcher took Britain further along the road to federation than any of her predecessors. Far from being a true nationalist, she was hopelessly infatuated with the United States. Far from promoting personal freedom, she made the state stronger, except where she replaced state monopolies with private ones.

Geoffrey Wheatcroft mocks the Thatcherite obsession with sovereignty and the pound sterling. "Men did not die at the Somme or at El Alamein," he wrote recently in the *Sunday Telegraph*, "with 'God and Governor of the Bank of England' on their lips."

But, hey, let's be fair. Mrs. Thatcher's achievements are not to be sneezed at. She was deliciously rude about the French Revolution in the presence of M. Mitterrand and she treated the Commonwealth with the scorn it deserves. When something really mattered to her, furthermore, she ignored consensus thinking. She was loyal to South Africa at a time when most Western politicians (not least those in the Republican and Tory parties) found it prudent to parrot ritual condemnations. Her industrial reforms broke once and for all the malign power of the trade unions. She destroyed the last vestiges of socialism in the Labour party, so that if Labour wins the next election Britain will be ruled by canting social democrats rather than by canting socialists. She abolished punitive taxation, reducing the standard rate from 33 to 25 percent and the top rate from 83 to 40 percent. Privatization must be counted a tactical political success, too, though whether it was an economic success is another matter. A monopoly is a monopoly is a monopoly, whether it is run by the state or by a private corporation. Finally, Mrs. Thatcher gave Britain a place in the international sun. She was respected by foreign heads of state—except when they happened to be her European partners.

Mrs. Thatcher was not, of course, a conservative. In the end she was not even a Thatcherite. She was a liberal capitalist and Little Englander who didn't deliver: the welfare state grew under her premiership and the march toward federalism continued. But she was unquestionably a remarkable woman, the sort that every man dreads. Perhaps the lesson for conservatives is this: never send a woman to do a man's job. For Mrs. Thatcher herself, the lesson comes from her mentor, Enoch Powell. It is that all political careers end in failure. Her tragedy is that she has compounded failure by refusing to accept defeat. It is, meanwhile, time to move on, and to leave Thatcherism, whatever it was, behind. ❐

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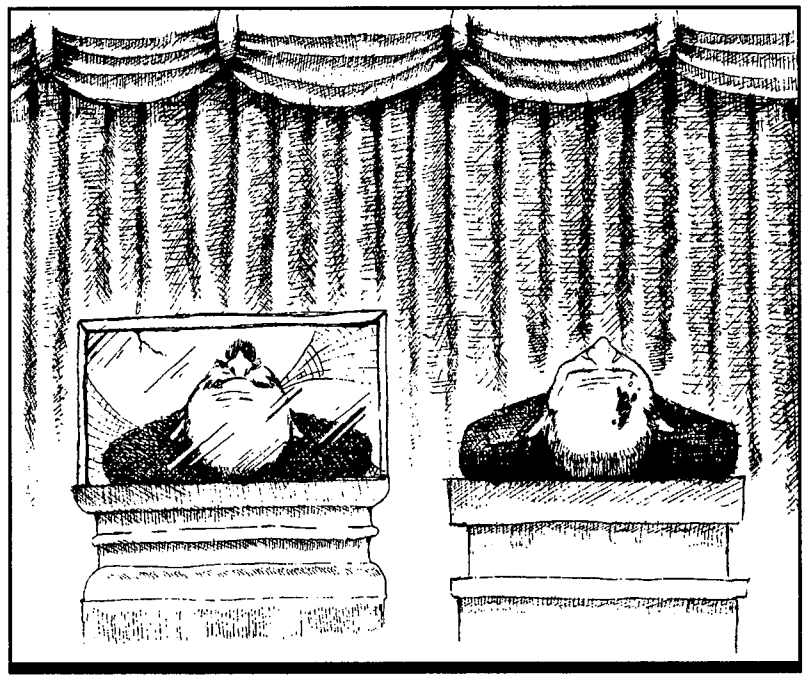
Adrian Karatnycky

Minsk Meet

Russia and Ukraine get together to go their separate ways —and Gorby retires.



On December 8, President Boris Yeltsin of Russia and President Leonid Kravchuk of Ukraine, with the concurrence of Stanislav Shushkevich of Belarus (formerly Byelorussia), met in Minsk to sign the obituary of the last empire: "The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as a subject of international law and a geopolitical reality, is ceasing its existence." Their declaration was a call upon the world community to withdraw diplomatic recognition from the Soviet Union and to confer it upon the newly sovereign republics of the Commonwealth of Independent States. If their action was driven by urgency and necessity, it was also calmly reasoned and well thought out. In dispensing with the USSR, the leaders of Europe's three newest nation-states were not opting for anarchy and civil war. Indeed, as events showed, Yeltsin, Kravchuk, and Shushkevich would not have acted without at least some assurance from the military that it would back their gambit. These were not three reckless, irrational men.

The urgency of their undertaking was clear: a worsening economic crisis, institutional paralysis, an almost willfully destructive central state, and a military uncertain whom it should serve. As early as October 1991, the USSR had been replaced by a loose economic community. After the coup, fewer than half of the old USSR's fifteen republics—Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kirgizstan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan—were participating in the reorganized Supreme Soviet. Yet even this parliamentary structure, which underwent a facelift following the August coup, could not survive. Its only significant legislative initiative came on November 19—a law guaranteeing deputies six months' severance pay in the event of the dissolution of the parliament. By December 11, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR—with Russia and Belarus no longer participating—could not even muster a quorum. The new Commonwealth was proof that democratic nationalism was the central political engine in the collapse of Communism and the unraveling of empire.

Mikhail Gorbachev's myth of a unitary Soviet state was accepted to the bitter end only by President Bush, whose man in Moscow Robert Strauss initially questioned the viability of the new Slavic-led Commonwealth. But since the failed coup, Gorbachev's central state had been taking a daily beating. In Azerbaijan, all USSR government offices were ordered closed as of October 19. By late November, Yeltsin had taken control of the economic levers of central state power. Then he announced that Russia would cease payments to seventy central ministries, leaving 100,000 of Mikhail Gorbachev's apparatchiks headed for the unemployment line. When conflicts arose among the republics, it was Boris Yeltsin and Nursultan Nazarbayev who plunged into action, as when they brokered a temporary respite to the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict in early October. When economic issues such as dividing the Soviet debt were at stake, Kiev—not Moscow—was the venue for deliberations and Ukrainian leader Kravchuk—not Gorbachev—hosted them. Gorbachev was deliberately excluded when

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ministers and presidents of the republics gathered in Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan, to discuss the post-Soviet economic community. And it was Minsk, the Slavic USSR's westernmost capital, that became the venue of the empire's iron curtain call.

There were other signs of imperial collapse. In Ukraine, troops patrolling the republic's western border with Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Poland were taking down the red Soviet flag and raising the blue and yellow colors of independent Ukraine. Border troops were trying to learn Ukrainian and adapting their Soviet uniforms to include Ukrainian emblems and symbols. While Yeltsin announced his intention to create a Russian national guard, the Ukrainian parliament went further, claiming dominion over all non-nuclear Soviet military forces in Ukraine and beginning to raise a Ukrainian army between 120,000 and 420,000 strong. (The Union of Ukrainian Officers has already signed up over 15,000 active-duty and 10,000 reserve officers.) In October, a sampling of public opinion found solid support for splitting up the Red Army, with 47 percent welcoming such a development as democratic, 19 percent worrying that it undermines the defensive capability of the country, and 14 percent concerned that it might lead to civil war. (The remaining 20 percent weren't sure how to answer.) In the last months of 1991, Mikhail Gorbachev formally controlled the black briefcase with one of the keys to the Soviet nuclear system, but with the military now siding with the leaders of Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine it seemed likely that Boris Yeltsin and Leonid Kravchuk would soon have their hands on the keys.

As events showed, Yeltsin, Kravchuk, and Shushkevich would not have acted without at least some assurance from the military that it would back their gambit. These were not three reckless, irrational men.

Much has been written about Gorbachev's fabled reforms, but it was the failed August coup that spelled the end of Communism and empire. Historians are likely to reject the notion that the failed coup was somehow a victory for glasnost and perestroika. Vladimir Bukovsky has suggested that, far from being its victim, Gorbachev may well have been engaged in preparing the coup. Even if he did not participate in it, he could well have planned to introduce a state of emergency at an appropriate moment. And while Gorbachev may have been held against his will in his Crimean *dacha*, the real targets of the putsch were the growing democratic movement and the centrifugal independence forces in the republics.

Of all the theories about why the coup didn't succeed, the least plausible is the one most readily offered—that its plotters were incompetent bunglers. The coup failed because of a profound split at the heart of the military-industrial complex. One instrument for that split was the USSR Scientific-Industrial Union, a little-known association headed by a former aide to Yuri Andropov—Arkady Volsky. Volsky's organization sharpened the division between the progressive, reform-oriented captains of Soviet industry and their more backward counterparts, and helped link up the industrial molochs of Stalinist economics, including much of the military-industrial complex, with reformist entrepreneurs, cooperative movement activists, and leaseholders. While Volsky himself may have tried to hedge his bets during the coup, many of his colleagues were forthright in their support of Boris Yeltsin. "Our nomenklatura in the military-industrial complex split. If they hadn't split, the putsch might have succeeded," says Vladimir Bokser, a leader of the Democratic Russia movement and the deputy chairman of the Moscow Assembly, a quasi-governmental forum for the leading democratic groups.

Other crucial factors contributed, including the courage of the tens of thousands who took to the streets of Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Kiev. A private detective agency provided security to the defenders of the Russian parliament. Managers of nearby hotels fed the heroic resisters. Farther away, strike committees and emerging free trade unions led resistance among coal miners in Russia and Ukraine, and pro-Yeltsin industrial workers in the Urals.

Another contributing factor was the emerging legitimacy of Russian statehood and the Russian president. Yeltsin's support was especially strong within the military's officer corps. He had won the overwhelming backing of the armed forces in June's presidential elections, despite explicit orders from the center to back former Soviet prime minister Nikolai Ryzhkov. During the coup, many soldiers and officers simply refused to move against their president. Opposition could also be found in the KGB: in Donetsk, in southeastern Ukraine, the local KGB leadership told a miners' strike committee that it would not move against workers if they staged a general strike. It was the official Communist-controlled unions that denounced the free trade unionists and urged workers not to disrupt the "rhythm of work."

The events of August 19-21 destroyed the cohesion of the three pillars of the Soviet state—the Communist party, the KGB, and the military. With the party now banned, its offices shut down, and its bank accounts frozen, the news media in Russia and Ukraine are daily revealing sensational details of illegal and wasteful Communist financial doings. The KGB, which formerly had a force of 488,000 workers, has been broken up along republic lines. The military, which too is fragmenting, is in no mood to intervene to preserve the old order.

The coup created a political vacuum that enabled, indeed encouraged, Boris Yeltsin and other republic leaders to press for independence. Russia's autumn offensive was the product of growing discontent with the central state. As

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Sergei Stankevich, a top Yeltsin adviser, told me in early October: "Gorbachev and the central authorities are playing a destructive role. Central government structures are creating confusion. Their *main role* is to sow confusion. Managers and administrators are uncertain about which regulations, laws, and decrees to obey. The existence of this dualism of center and republic is paralyzing reform. These questions will soon have to be resolved." On October 28, Yeltsin moved decisively to resolve them. Concluding that it would be folly to wait for other republics to fall into line, he announced that Russia would create its own currency, launch its own price reforms, and proceed with a fast-paced privatization. As Vladimir Bokser noted: "Yeltsin's allies decided to opt for the formula of a smaller Russia, but one that can begin to undertake real reforms." The main figure in this turnaround was 35-year-old economist Yegor Gaidar, now Russia's deputy prime minister.

Yeltsin's embrace of Russian democratic nationalism first surfaced in March 1990, when he and other members of his Democratic Russia electoral bloc advanced the idea of Russia's state sovereignty in response to polling data that showed a fundamental shift in Russian public opinion. Among a majority of Russians, weary of the burdens of empire, a new, inward-looking Russian patriotism was taking root. Demographics showed, too, that some two million Russians had left the non-Russian republics in the 1980s to return to the motherland.

The process was slow and full of setbacks. When in May 1990 two parliamentarians—Christian Democrat Vladimir Aksyuchits and Social Democrat Oleg Rumyantsev—unfurled small Russian tricolor flags at a session of the Russian Congress of People's Deputies, they were jeered by a majority of their colleagues. But Yeltsin and the democrats pressed on. They created a national anthem for their republic, provided for a free Russian press and television, extended the offer of Russian citizenship to countrymen living in other republics (going so far as to promise them a "law of return"), and began to define the economic and political prerogatives of sovereignty. They developed a Russian constitution and ensured the democratic election of a Russian president.

Good Riddance

Mikhail Gorbachev will have resigned by the time you read this. Spurned by his largest republics, he is now being abandoned by his closest aides. He is irrelevant. After the banning of the party to which he had given his life came the collapse of the empire he had sworn to defend. Now, Gorbachev appears bitter and unstable. His domestic press ignores him: in recent months, Soviet and Russian evening newscasts have led with reports on Boris Yeltsin or the comings and goings of the Russian and Ukrainian parliaments. The governments of the former Soviet republics have forgotten him. Politicians in Moscow and Kiev don't even mention him. By the end of 1991, Gorbachev was noticed only when he traveled abroad, shining in the reflected celebrity of George Bush and François Mitterrand. When asked on October 31 whether he was contemplating a run for the USSR presidency, Anatoly Sobchak, the popular mayor of St. Petersburg, matter-of-factly told the Interfax press agency no. That post, he said, "will soon be abolished."

That the Army is throwing its weight behind Kravchuk, Yeltsin, and Shushkevich is only part of Gorbachev's problem. On October 23, the Russian newscast "Vesti" reported that "the general crisis facing Mikhail Gorbachev has one further extremely important dimension. . . . The Soviet president may be charged with violations of the law." The report noted that "Gorbachev probably had a direct relationship in the diversion of funds designated for humanitarian aid to our country and their transfer into the hands of foreign Communist parties. . . . In many other countries, similar facts would lead to the resignation of the president." Just the day before, Russia's justice minister, Nikolai Fyodorov, had asserted to the Russian parliament that in 1990 Gorbachev sanctioned the funneling of Western aid money back overseas to prop up Communist parties in the West. By mid-November, as a member of President Yeltsin's delegation to Bonn, Fyodorov was still suggesting, this time to the German public, that Gorbachev was criminally culpable.

While visiting Washington in late October, Yelena Bonner, the human rights activist and widow of Dr. Andrei Sakharov, noted that there was no legal basis for Mikhail Gorbachev's presidential status. After all, she argued, Gorbachev was elected by a parliament that had virtually disbanded itself. His only claim to power had been election by the USSR Congress of People's Deputies that itself was elected in rigged and tainted elections in 1989. Now this body and the USSR Supreme Soviet were no more, having been replaced by a Supreme Soviet designated by constituent republics. And while the old Supreme Soviet had little legitimacy, the new parliament had none. It was a transitional construct based on principles not foreseen in the current constitution. In this sense Gorbachev rules extraconstitutionally. As Mrs. Bonner prophetically pointed out: "We are dealing with a country that has no name, has no clear idea of its borders, and has no legitimate government. Yet the West continues to pretend that all three still exist."

In his last days in power, Mikhail Gorbachev increasingly was grasping at straws. On October 12, he told a central television audience: "You know, I can't imagine that there can be a union without the Ukraine. . . . I think the Ukraine is an irreplaceable factor in the construction of a new union." On October 20, he warned that unilateral actions by Ukraine and other republics to raise their own armies was unconstitutional. On October 21, he told "Mayak" radio listeners that economic aid depends on preserving a central state: "We value the solidarity of the international community, which wants to see the union as a democratic state with a predictable policy." On November 4, the Soviet president was pleading with Russia to back the union. By December 9, when he denounced the new Russian-Belarusian-Ukrainian Commonwealth as "illegal," the game was up. —*AK*

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After the coup, the once-scorned Russian flag was omnipresent.

Accelerating Russia's move to statehood was a similar movement in the republic's historic and cultural sibling, Ukraine, a Texas-sized country of 52 million. There, the move toward independence is irreversible and the nation-building euphoria pronounced. The results of Ukraine's independence referendum—90.3 percent in favor, with a turnout of 84 percent—confirm the impact of nationalist ideas. Not a single region failed to support statehood for Ukraine. In western Ukraine (with a 98-percent "yes" vote), democratic nationalists rule with confidence and authority. They have added a patriotic and democratic content to the educational curriculum, reformed the local police, peopling it with newly trained officers; restored and reopened thousands of churches; and wrested control of trade unions from Communist apparatchiks. Indeed, at the time of the coup the Communist party was already a spent force in the western regions of Lviv, Ternopil, and Ivano-Frankivsk. In central Ukraine (95 percent pro-independence), democrats now run the city councils of the capital Kiev and the industrial city of Dniprodzerzhinsk. Although Ukrainians in Kiev are as likely to speak Russian as their native tongue, they are no less determined than their brethren in Lviv to be rid of Moscow's domination.

The Ukrainian move to independence has been largely free of chauvinism; it is fueled mainly by practical economic interests, an awareness that prosperous Ukraine has an excellent chance of improving its lot if left alone.

Patriotic sentiment has also made significant headway in the countryside and in former Cossack strongholds like Zaporozhye, where for two years the democratic Rukh movement has conducted massive Woodstock-style festivals of Cossack culture. As many as half a million participants have thronged to these cultural and historical celebrations that feature song, dance, pageantry, and speechifying. By resurrecting the region's tradition of Cossack self-rule dating back to the seventeenth century, Rukh succeeded in rekindling local pride and support for Ukrainian statehood. On December 1, 81 percent of this area's vote was pro-independence. (Youth culture, too, has become fiercely patriotic. Punk bands and rap groups have adopted Ukrainian—the language of the oppressed—for their music, drawing a following of hundreds of thousands of teens. One year ago, radicalized youths forced the resignation of Ukraine's retrograde prime minister. It's become trendy to be Ukrainian.)

Even in the Russian redoubt of Odessa, 85 percent voted for independence. In the southeastern coal-mining Don Basin, where one out of every two workers is Russian and 90 percent of the population is Russophone, support for statehood was 77 percent. When I first met the battle-hardened miners who led the region's strike movement in late 1989, they were suspicious of all politicians—democrats and Communists alike—and regarded the Rukh as extremist. By the summer of 1991, they had embraced Ukrainian sovereignty. In part, their move was born of necessity: Yeltsin's decision to take control of Russia's coal industry meant that Ukrainian miners now had to deal with Kiev. But given a recent report by the Deutsche Bank that rated Ukraine as the republic with the best economic prospects, the workers have good reason for optimism. (Yegor Gaidar believes that if inter-republic trade is based on world prices, both Russia and Ukraine will come out winners, with Central Asia and the Baltics losing out.)

Ukraine's independence movement and its presidential election campaign allowed anti-Communist nationalists to make their case to the people. In the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, anti-Communism is flourishing under the slogan *Kommunyaky na hilyaky* ("Commies to the gallows"). And few have better anti-Communist credentials than Vyacheslav Chornovil, the charismatic, cerebral 53-year-old journalist-turned-political-prisoner who in 1990 was elected governor of Lviv province. A rapid-fire orator, the democratic nationalist Chornovil allayed Russian fears of Ukrainian independence by proposing a federalized Ukraine, in which educational and cultural policy devolves to the regional level. In late October, the leaders of a widely supported strike movement in the Donbas issued a public statement endorsing the integrity of Ukraine, denouncing attempts to redraw the republic's borders, and backing Chornovil. In a series of whistle-stops, he won converts to the independence cause, walking in on meetings of thousands of skeptical coal miners or hundreds of skeptical Jewish and Russian intellectuals and leaving them amid raucous applause. In the end, however, Chornovil lost out to ex-party ideologue Leonid Kravchuk by 61–23 percent, in part because the wily parliamentary leader dominated television and radio.

More significantly, Kravchuk won because he skillfully distanced himself from his servile past and emerged as a leader genuinely committed to Ukrainian statehood. After the failed August coup, Kravchuk banned the Communist party and allowed its property to be seized by local governments. When I met him in Kiev in mid-October, he was forthright in his defense of Ukrainian independence. "We cannot merely pronounce independence. We must create concrete mechanisms, take concrete steps toward statehood," he declared. "In the area of international relations, we have to claim our place in Europe and take full part in the United Nations." He left little doubt about Ukraine's participation in any union of republics: "We do not want today to take part in political unions which have as their aim a central government structure. . . . We have no use for . . . a union that allows someone else to govern on our territory."

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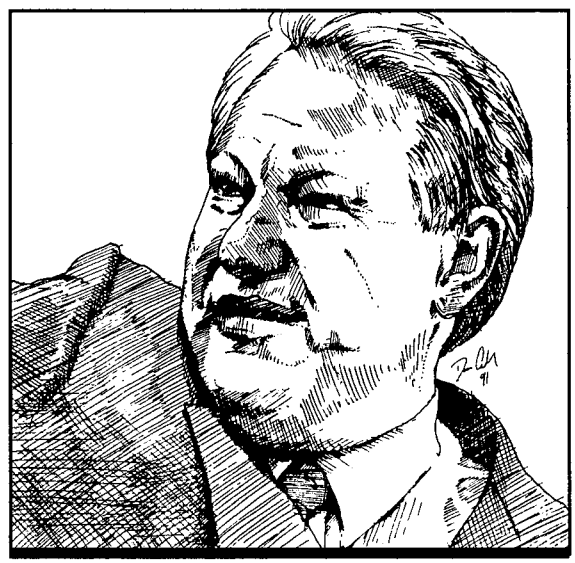
Together, Russia and Ukraine account for approximately 70 percent of the former USSR's population and 80 percent of its territory. For centuries their fates have been intertwined. Ukrainians long served in key administrative posts in the czarist empire and do so in today's unraveling USSR (reform economist Grigory Yavlinsky and top Yeltsin aide Sergei Stankevich are both Ukrainian-born), while Russians streamed into Ukraine's cities to live a more comfortable life. The poet Ivan Drach, who is chairman of the Rukh, worries about the fate of Ukraine's dominant neighbor. "Will Russian democracy triumph over Russian chauvinism?" he asks.

Two factors give reason for hope: Boris Yeltsin and the powerful Democratic Russia coalition movement. Yeltsin's democratic inclinations have been the subject of intense speculation, but his recent behavior has demonstrated a commitment to democratic change, economic reform, and a rejection of Russian imperialism. Immediately after the collapse of the coup, the Russian president shut himself off from outside contact. Fearing manipulation by interlopers and fair-weather allies, he insulated himself with a bunch of cronies he's known for decades, apparatchiks from his years as Communist overlord of Sverdlovsk. While this set off alarm bells within the democratic community, Democratic Russia leader Galina Starovoytova is optimistic that "Yeltsin has again opened the door to the democrats." In recent weeks he has held a series of consultative meetings with the Democratic Russia leaders, who are satisfied with the positions that have emerged from these deliberations, including Yeltsin's economic reform program. Moreover, the new generation of young democrats and technical experts in Yeltsin's government helped pave the way to the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States.



Democratic Russia has emerged as the best guarantor of an independent Russia's democratic transformation. Such movement leaders as Starovoytova, Father Gleb Yakunin, Lev Ponomaryov, Bella Denisenko, and Yuri Afanasyev have spoken out clearly on behalf of independence for all the republics. A mass-based organization coalition similar to Poland's Solidarity or the Czech Civic Forum, Democratic Russia has nearly half a million members and is particularly strong outside Moscow and St. Petersburg.

The Ukrainian move to independence has been largely free of chauvinism; it is fueled mainly by practical economic interests, an awareness that prosperous Ukraine has an excellent chance of improving its lot if left alone. The Rukh coalition has sought to engage Russians, Jews, and Poles, blocking the emergence of mass-based "inter-fronts" or other Russian chauvinist structures.

When we met in Moscow in October, Sergei Stankevich, one of the three state counsels to President Yeltsin, was already confronting the possibility of Ukrainian independence. "Losing Ukraine would be like losing an arm, painful but bearable," he told me in Moscow. Such a formulation is a sign of progress. After all, it was Lenin who said three-quarters of a century ago: "To lose Ukraine would be to lose one's head."

On December 1, Ukrainian voters launched the final assault on Gorbachev's empire. Russia, which already had agreed to abide by the results of the plebiscite, extended diplomatic recognition to the new state. Other governments followed, including Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Canada, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Finland, and Switzerland. The road to Ukrainian statehood, of course, was not smooth; nor is its newfound freedom a sure thing. The greatest danger still lies in the attitude of the Soviet military, which remains loyal to Yeltsin and the new Commonwealth. Still, the move toward Ukrainian independence has raised great anxieties within military circles. Soviet Defense Minister Marshal Yevgeny Shaposhnikov, who resisted the coup plotters, at first sharply criticized the Ukrainian legislature's effort to take control of troops and matériel on Ukrainian soil. In early November, however, Marshal Shaposhnikov told the *Moscow News*:

> I understand only too well [Ukraine's] desire to be independent. But let's follow a civilized road. . . . It wouldn't pay to withdraw the Army from Ukraine. Most probably, it doesn't want to leave—many officers would likely choose to stay. . . . The most important thing . . . is to immediately start developing a concept of collective security. There is a need to conclude an agreement on the defense alliance of sovereign states. We must prepare and adopt a status on stationing Union troops on the territory of independent republics in the transition period. [It could last about five years.] . . . My prognosis is as follows: the Supreme Soviet of Ukraine will achieve its objective, to create its own armed forces. May God grant them success.

Shaposhnikov made it clear that he would not countenance the army's entanglement in ethnic conflicts or political matters: "No political objective is worth one drop of human blood." His thinking was apparently widespread. For example, some sort of agreement was reached between the Soviet military and the Ukrainian leadership, as could be in-

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Gun-Shy

by Michael Ledeen

The old models of domestic and international behavior are disintegrating, the new ones not yet defined. The former Soviet Union is a shambles, and neither we nor the leaders of the new republics can fully foresee the shape of things to come. Similarly, the vision of an infinitely competent welfare state is in pieces, along with many of the moral standards that underlay the tradition of Western liberalism, and we are groping for new economic models, and new standards of behavior. If we had leaders who appreciated the excitement of the moment, who were willing to fulfill America's revolutionary destiny, we could be consciously shaping this great turning-point in human history. Alas, our leaders have not grasped their historic opportunity.

The main reason we have lost our bearings is that we don't have a sense of mission. The Bush cabinet, for example, is largely composed of "be-ers," not "do-ers"; guys who are happy to fill prestigious positions, to vaunt their "professionalism" and "pragmatism." Such people are dangerous because they lack clear goals: for them, success is making a deal, any deal. Baker makes promises to all and sundry to get them to the great conference table in the sky, as if holding talks were what diplomacy is all about. Bush lectures the Ukrainians on their "impossible dream" of independence only weeks before they achieve it, just as he snubbed Yeltsin and gave a cold shoulder to the Baltic leaders only weeks before their successes. Darman and Brady make a budget deal with Congress that is first hailed as the discovery of the Holy Grail, then deplored as an unfortunate accident.

Lacking the Vision Thing, this administration changes its policies with startling rapidity, offering no indication that the new ones will be more durable than the old. Key decisions are made on the basis of personality, for example, supporting Gorbachev long after he ceased to hold real power. This decision apparently rested on White House antipathy toward Boris Yeltsin, and produced some moments of black comedy last fall, when Bush repeatedly telephoned Yeltsin, urging him to support Gorbachev's fatuous projects for union.

We have been dragged, kicking and screaming, into lukewarm support for the republics, just as we were dragged to support Baltic independence, and just as we will eventually be dragged to back the little republics of the old Yugoslavia.

It was the great conceit of Bush and Baker (along with the Kohls and the Mitterrands) to believe that the collapse of the Soviet Empire could be managed by a small number of reasonable men—including, most notably, Mikhail Gorbachev. Now that the abolition of the USSR has been formally announced, they might finally recognize that Gorbachev is powerless and despised at home. Unfortunately, the mistakes of the past few years will deprive us of much of the authority we might have had. The new political units, whether today in the former Soviet Union, or tomorrow in Africa, Western Europe, or Canada, will not soon forget the consistent refusal of Bush, Baker, and the boys to recognize the duly elected governments in the Baltics, Ukraine, and the other Soviet republics, or in Croatia.

We could bestride the world like a colossus. In the Gulf War, offense (American air power) so outdistanced defense (Soviet or other) that, for the immediate future, we are militarily unchallengeable. Yet just as our power has reached its apogee, our leaders are racing to dismantle it. True to the great tradition of "bringing the boys home," many Americans still believe—notwithstanding millennia of human history—that peace is the normal condition of mankind. Once victory was announced in the Cold War, Democrats in Congress—with little opposition from Republicans—immediately set about their butter-rather than-guns frenzy. While there have been plaintive cries to save this program or that military base, these are the sounds of parochial turf fights, not the trumpets of the New World Order.

After each world war we disarmed, and both times had to race to save ourselves later on. We can only pray that the third time will not prove fatal. The world is not automatically becoming more peaceful; in most places it is becoming more violent. The former Soviet Union is beset with pockets of armed conflict, and will be lucky to avoid larger civil wars; Yugoslavia—to the great shame of the West—is a catastrophe; lesser conflicts simmer inside India and within various African nations (Burundi, Zaire, Angola, Somalia, Togo, Cameroon, and of course South Africa). For years, many smaller countries refrained from foreign adventures for fear of the superpowers; today they are increasingly willing to take risks—even major ones, as Saddam did—because the Soviet Union is gone and we are unpredictable. It's now safe to challenge the Americans (albeit not so stupidly and blatantly as Saddam did), because (a) you'll always have time to reconsider if the United States looks like it might actually fight for its principles, and (b) even if the Americans attack, you're odds-on to live to fight another day.

This awareness, in the wake of Soviet disintegration, could have explosive consequences. It does not take great imagination, for example, to foresee the sale of weapons of mass destruction from former Soviet republics desperate for hard currency to Middle Eastern fanatics, whether heads of state or terrorist chieftains. A dispersion of top Soviet scientists and doom doctors—similar to the scattering of the Nazis after World War II—is already under way, and many are going to radical Arab regimes. Any bets against Saddam acquiring a nuclear arsenal or top biological-weapons experts from former Soviets? Or Assad? Abu Nidal? We could have taken the initiative on the matter, linking our recognition of the new republics to their divesting themselves of nuclear and other weapons. We might even have offered to buy them. Instead, led as we are by people who believe that form is everything in life, we are imploring the new republics to sign pieces of paper (e.g., the nuclear non-proliferation treaty), and we continue to rely upon the United Nations to ensure that Saddam does not rearm. That will not work. Someone should tell Bush and Baker: *To hell with treaties—grab the weapons.* Because unless we remove Saddam, a frightening time bomb will tick away in Baghdad. Do you think they'll do that? Neither do I, and as Saddam and his ilk regroup, it is only a matter of time before some of us become their victims. ❐

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ferred from reports that soldiers were encouraged to vote for Kravchuk in the December election and from the fact that 80 percent of them supported independence.

Speaking before the Russian parliament on December 12, Yeltsin reported that the new Commonwealth of Independent States formed in Minsk just four days earlier was now supported by military leaders. He also revealed that the Commonwealth's military arrangement will involve a "defense alliance within a single command of strategic forces." Ukraine can thus develop its own national armed forces, which will cooperate with Russia's in a NATO-like command. The same day, Kravchuk reported that Soviet military leaders on Ukrainian soil had agreed to abide by a decree making them subject to his control.

This rapprochement would not have been possible without the active involvement of Yeltsin, whose visionary leap toward a loose commonwealth of states holds the promise of a stable evolution toward democracy, and augurs well for resolving the thorny question of what to do with the former Red Army. For the moment, the real basis for military loyalty will be wages, housing, and food. Red Army officers posted in Ukraine realize that they can continue living in comfortable postings in Kiev and Lviv under Ukrainian control or risk expulsion and relocation to such harsh terrain as Russia's long border with China or to Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Already, some of them are switching allegiance. And the Ukrainian parliament's call for Ukrainian officers now outside the republic to complete their service at home is being heard.

The most significant aspect of the new Commonwealth of Independent States is that it does not create a new government structure above that of the constituent nation states. Rather, it combines aspects of the European Community and NATO, with a unified military command and a single nuclear force. While it is difficult to predict what the future holds, a likely scenario can be put forward. The community created by Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine is likely to be joined by all but the Baltic states and quirky Georgia. In the long term, however, the Commonwealth may well see the departure of the Central Asian republics and Azerbaijan, which could eventually be drawn into a Pan-Turkic community (the more optimistic prospect) or a fundamentalist Islamic confederation (the darker possibility).

As for Ukraine, many of its political activists already regard the new Commonwealth as a transitional structure. Ukraine is likely to press for a place in the new Europe along with Hungary, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. Georgia is likely to pursue an isolationist course, under its increasingly irrational despot, Zviad Gamsakhurdia—a leader who gives new meaning to the idea of political paranoia. Moldova, which has indicated it wants to join the Commonwealth, in the end will succumb to pressure for reunification with Romania. Armenia, under pressure from its Turkic neighbors, will cling to a strong alliance with Russia.

Of course, this scenario does not take into account a reactionary restoration. With an unraveling economy, the worst grain harvest in recent memory, and price rises, inflation, and unemployment likely to heighten social tensions, the possibility of an irredentist Russian fascism cannot be ignored. In the 1991 Russian presidential election, Vladimir Zhirinovsky, a Ukrainian-born chauvinist, received six million votes on a platform that called for abolishing the republics and restoring a great Russian imperial state. Zhirinovsky received financial support from both the KGB and the Communist party. Another imperialist voice is that of Nikolai Travkin, who heads the self-styled Democratic party of Russia.

The Zhirinovsky phenomenon, Travkin's calls to restore the union, and the August coup itself help explain why democratic forces in the republics, which once were ready to support a loose confederation, prefer complete independence today. As Mykhaylo Horyn, vice chairman of Rukh, observes: "We do not want to be part of a union that at any time can fall into tyranny. We want to be masters of our own democratic destiny."

While the future of the ex-USSR was being shaped, the U.S. remained a bystander. On the very day 26 million Ukrainian citizens opted for independence, U.S. Ambassador to Gorbachev Robert Strauss was shown on Soviet television handing over $600 million in food credits to Ivan Silayev, the Soviet prime minister without portfolio, if you will. The legacy of this approach is that, as of December 25, we had a policy for a country that didn't exist and a close relationship with a leader who had no power. It also meant we had only two U.S. consular staff on the ground in Ukraine, covering a country of 52 million, and no one permanently based in Kazakhstan, Belarus, or the other emerging nation states.

The Bush Administration has relegated the U.S. to a marginal role in advancing democratic change, which more and more is being shaped by the leaders of Russia and Ukraine. It also means that the U.S. is ill-prepared to play a constructive role in helping resolve major issues that loom on the horizon, even if the new Commonwealth arrangement holds. Among them:

- a possible conflict over ethnically Russian Crimea, which may eventually want to secede from Ukraine;
- fundamental economic reform and economic recovery, which will require a significant U.S. and Western presence in most republics;
- protection of ethnic minority rights in the republics;
- continued efforts by local, regional, and republic-level apparatchiks to cling to power by resorting to nationalist demagogy.

If it is to contribute to the democratic resolution of these matters, the U.S. must recognize that even with the welcome creation of a loose Commonwealth, central authority no longer exists and can only be restored through violence and repression. The age of Gorbachev has come to an end. A new future beckons, so we'd better get used to dealing with Russia and Ukraine—the two largest countries in Europe. ❐

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ABERNATHY
ABERNETHY
ABRAHAM(S)
ABRAMS
ACHESON
AC(K)ERLY
ACKERMAN
ACKERS
ACTON
ADAIR
ADAM(S)
ADKINS
AGAR
AGER
AGNEW
AIKEN(S)
AINSWORTH
AITKEN
AKERS
ALBERT(S)
ALBRECHT
ALBRIGHT
ALDEN
ALDERMAN
ALDERSON
ALDRICH
ALDRIDGE
ALEXANDER
ALFORD
ALGER
ALLAN
ALLEN
ALLISON
ALLMAN
ALSOP
ALSTON
ALVORD
AMANN
AMBLER
AMBROSE
AMES
AMMANN
AMOS
ANDERSON
ANDREW(S)
ANGEL(L)
ANTHONY
ANTRIM
APPLEBY
APPLEGATE
APPLETON
ARCHER
ARCHIBALD
ARM(I)STEAD
ARMITAGE
ARMSTRONG
ARNDT
ARNETT
ARNOLD
ARNOTT
ARROWSMITH
ARTHUR
ASBURY
ASHBY
ASH(E)
ASHLEY
ASHTON
ASTON
ATCHISON
ATHERTON
ATKINS
ATKINSON
ATWATER
ATWELL
ATWOOD
AUBR(E)Y
AUSTIN
AVERELL
AVERILL
AVERY
AXTELL
AYER(S)
AYRES
BABBITT
BABCOCK
BACH(E)
BACHMAN(N)
BACON
BADGER
BADGLEY
BAER
BAGGETT
BAGGOTT
BAGLEY
BAGWELL
BAILEY
BAINBRIDGE
BAIN(BENS)
BAIRD
BAKER
BALCH
BALCOM(B)
BALDRIDGE
BALDWIN
BALL
BALLANTINE
BALLANTYNE
BALLARD
BALLENGER
BALLENTINE
BALLINGER
BALLOU
BAMFORD
BANCROFT
BANGS
BANISTER
BANK(E)S
BANNING
BANNISTER
BANTA
BARBEE
BARBOUR
BARCLAY
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BARTLETT
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BLYTH(E)
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BO(A)RMAN
BODELL
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BOGGS
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BOLAND
BOLDEN
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BOYLE(S)
BOYNTON
BRAC(E)(Y)
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BRADBURY
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BRADSHAW
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BURT BURTON
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BUTTERFIELD
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BYRD
BYRNE
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CADY
CAHILL
CAIN(E)
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CALLAHAN
CALLAWAY
CALLENDER
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CAMERON
CAMPBELL
CAMP(E)
CANFIELD
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CRITTENDEN
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CROMWELL
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CROSIER
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CROS(S)MAN
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CROXTON
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CRUTCHER
CULBERTSON
CULLEN
CULP
CULVER
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CUNNINGHAM
CURL(E)(S)
CURRIE
CURRIER
CURRY
CURTIN
CURTIS
CUSHING
CUSHMAN
CUTHBERT
CUTLER
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DALRYMPLE
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DAM(E)RON
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DANA
DANE
DANFORTH
DANIEL(S)
DAN(N)
DARBY
DARLING
DARLINGTON
DARNALL
DANELL
DARRA(G)H
DARROW
DART
DAUGHERTY
DAVENPORT
DAV(E)Y
DAVID(S)
DAVK(D)SON
DAVIE
DAVI(E)S
DAWE(S)
DAWSON
DAY
DAYTON
DALE
DEAN(E)
DEARBORN
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DECKER(T)
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DERBY
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DEWEY
DEWITT
DEWOLFE(
DEXTER
DIBBLE
DICK(E)
DICKENS
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DICKERSON
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DIEHL
DIETRICH
DIGG(E)S
DIKE
DIKEMAN
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DIM(M)ICK
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DINSM(O)RE
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DO(O)LAN
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DORMAN
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DOWN(E)S
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DOYLE
DRAKE
DRAPER
DRESSER
DREW
DREWRY
DRINKWATER
DRIVER
DRUMMOND
DRURY
DRYDEN
DUBOIS
DUCKWORTH
DUDLEY
DUFF
DUFFIELD
DUFFY
DUG(G)AN
DUKE(S)
DULAN(E)Y
DUMAS
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DURKIN
DUSTIN
DUTTON
DUVAL(L)
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DWYER
DYCKMAN
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DYK(E)MAN
DYKE(S)
DYRE
EAD(E)S
EAGER
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EASTON
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EATON
EBERHAR(D)T
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EDDY
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E(D)GERTON
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EDMONSTON
EDMUNDS
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EDWARDS
EGGLESTON
ELDER
ELDRED(G)E
ELDRIDGE
ELIOT
ELKIN(S)
ELLERY
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ELL(L)WOOD
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FITZPATRICK
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FLEMM(I)NG
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FRED(E)RICK
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GRUBB(S)
GRYMES
GU(E)NT(H)ER
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HAUS(E)MAN(N)
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HEDRICK
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HENDERSON
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HOTCHKISS
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HUME(S)
HUMPREY(S)
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HUNGERFORD
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HUR(L)BU(R)T
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HUSBAND(S)
HUSSEY
HUTCHE(R)SON
HUTCHIN(G)S
HUTCHI(N)SON
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HYATT
HYDE
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IDE
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INGERSOLL
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IRBY
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IRVIN(E)
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IRWIN
ISAAC(S)
ISBELL
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JACKMAN
JACK(S)
JACKSON
JACOB(S)
JACQUES
JA(E)GER
JAMES
JAMIE(E)SON
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JANS(S)EN
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JARMAN
JARRETT
JARVIS
JAY(E)
JEFF(E)RIES
JEFFERSON
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JEN(C)K(E)S
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JUSTICE
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KAISER
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KAVANA(U)GH
KAY(E)
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MABR(E)Y
MA(C)ARTHUR
MACAULAY
MA(C)CLINTOCK
MA(C)CORKLE
MA(C)DONALD
MA(C)DOUGAL(L)
MA(C)FADDEN
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MA(C)MILLAN
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MA(C)MURRAY
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MANDEVILLE
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MCADAM(S)
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MENDENHALL
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MEREDITH
MER(R)IAM
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MESSENGER
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METCALF(E)
MEYER(S)
MICHAEL
MICKLE
MIDDLETON
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MOTHERSHEAD
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MYER(S)
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NEAL(E)
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NICHOLSON
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PRENTIS(S)
PRESCOTT
PRESTON
PRETTYMAN
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PROCTER
PROCTOR
PROSSER
PROUT(Y)
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QUINN(N)
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RADCLIFF(E)
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SAMUEL(S)
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SANDERSON
SANDS
SANFORD
SANGER
SARGENT
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SAVIER
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SAXTON
SAYER(S)
SAYLES
SAYRE
SCALES
SCARB(O)ROUGH
SCARLETT
SCHA(E)F(F)EK
SCH(H)ELL
SCHEN(C)K
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SCHMID(T)
SCHMIT(T)
SCHNEIDER
SCH(O)FIELD
SCHOOLEY
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SCHRADER
SCHRECK
SCHRO(E)DER
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SCHUMACHER
SCHUMAN(N)
SCHUSTER
SCHUTT(E)
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SCHWAR(T)Z
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SCOVILL(E)
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SCRUBBS
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SCULL
SEAL(S)
SEAMAN
SEARCY
SEARL(E)(S)
SEARS
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SEBASTIAN
SEDGWICK
SEEGER
SEEL(E)Y
SE(E)VER
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All the Duke's Men

by Victor Gold

The ferocity of Hitler's Ku Klux Klan cannot be exaggerated, but the fact remains that the bravest people in Germany are excluded from the gang. It takes very little courage to join a racket whose members enjoy the right to cheat and rob the nonmembers, but the man who defies the Nazi mob does so knowing that the Nazis will break him, persecute him and his family, and perhaps kill him.

—Westbrook Pegler, c. 1935

FAST FORWARD/*The National Press Club, Fall 1991:* Enter David Duke, reeling. Only a month before, he was talking to his interior decorator about the color scheme he had in mind for the Louisiana governor's mansion (*Schwarz und Rot*). According to his senior adviser, John Rarick, Duke was running neck-and-neck with Edwin Edwards in the days leading up to their November 16 election runoff.

Alas, poor Rarick! His political protégé went down in one of the most massive landslides in modern Louisiana history. VOTE FOR THE CROOK, urged the pro-Edwards bumper stickers seen on the streets of New Orleans as Louisianians went to the polls; and vote they did, in record numbers, giving Edwards 61 percent, Duke 39 percent. There was little else for David Duke to do except respond to the fervent call of his hard-core constituency. He would go to Washington and announce for President.

David Duke's hard-core constituency, to keep the record straight, isn't the 39 percent of the Louisiana electorate that chose not to vote-for-the-crook; nor is it the true-believing dunderheads outside the state who sent money to his campaign. No. These faithful followers, like the public office he purports to want in any given election year, Duke can take or leave. What he can't take or leave, however, is the attention of the national media: the lights, the cameras, the action. He is addicted to it. He loves it, in the rustic phrase Earl Long used in speaking of an opponent's predilection for graft, "like a hog loves slop."

The addiction is mutual. With Jesse Jackson out of this year's presidential race, there is desperate need on the part of the media for a high-intensity but essentially irrelevant candidate they can call their own. Pat Buchanan? He doesn't fit the job description. Intense, yes, but the definition of an irrelevant candidacy in this context is one which, but for the attention of the press, wouldn't exist. Take away the cameras and columns, and who is Jesse Jackson? The same isn't true of Buchanan, who entered the presidential race as designated hitter for a disgruntled Republican faction. But David Duke? Without a hot-eyed press corps tracking his every zag, where would he be?

I'll tell you where. Exactly where he was when he ran for President four years ago: bringing up the rear, behind Lyndon LaRouche.

Not that Duke thrives, as does Jackson, because the national media fawn on him. On the contrary, Duke is one of those candidates made large by the opprobrium heaped on his coiffed head by the nattering nabobs: they give him the traction he needs to keep running. They put him on camera, write him up in their columns, first, because the aberrant sells, and they are, despite their claims of a higher calling, simply peddlers out to make a buck. Roone Arledge doesn't pay Ted Koppel seven figures a year for putting Paul Tsongas on the air to spell out his health-care program.

They also love Duke because he reaffirms their basic belief that the American electorate—save for a small, enlightened gene pool in the northeast corridor—is given to retrogressive tendencies and has to be saved from itself. It follows that, having created David Duke, the nabobs, in the godlike mode they relish in election years, feel obligated to destroy him. So they set him up for interviews-in-depth—Koppel vs. Duke, the eve of the November 16 run-off—and he makes mincemeat of them (Koppel, indeed, not being nearly, indeed, as clever, indeed, as the yahoo he thought to set up). Or they rage about him, and what he represents, in their op-ed columns: Wicker, Lewis, Kinsley, et al.—the elite writing for the elite, blaming his rise on Reagan and Bush; but for all their footwork, not laying a glove on the target.

It is at times like these that I wish Pegler were still around.

The irony is that Westbrook Pegler in his declining years became a fulminating anti-Semite. Here was the newspaperman—he detested the pompous descriptive "journalist"—who had taken on Hitler, Mussolini, the KKK, the Silver Shirts, the Black Legion, Gerald L.K. Smith, and other native American fascists at a time, the mid-1930s, when it counted; who presciently wrote of the Nazis in 1935 that "they are coming to the point where they will put it up to the humane nations of the world to rescue the Jews from Germany, leaving all their possessions behind, unless they want to witness the spectacle of the slow massacre of six hundred thousand people."

What led Pegler down the twisting road of anti-Semitism in his last days, I'll never know. No doubt the answer lies in the tensile nature of what his biographer, Finis Farr, called his "personality of warring opposites." But whatever the cause, I prefer to remember the Westbrook Pegler of my formative years, the most readable, quotable, provocative columnist of the 1930s and

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'40s. Here is that Pegler—"Peg" to his intimates in the newsroom—writing of his trade and fellow tradesmen:

"Of all the fantastic fog-shapes that have risen off the swamp of confusion since the big war, the most futile and, at the same time, the most pretentious, is the deep-thinking, hair-trigger columnist or commentator who knows all the answers offhand and can settle great affairs with absolute finality three days or even six days a week." *(Are you listening, Anthony Lewis?)*

"Being one of these myself, I have been trying to figure out how we came to be. Some, I know, have been pontificating for twenty years and have come to regard themselves as intellectual landmarks and American institutions as permanent as Baseball." *(And you, George Will?)*

"We include experts on the budget who can't balance an expense account; economic experts who can't find the 5:15 on a suburban time-table, much less read a balance sheet, labor experts who never did a lick of work in their lives, pundits on the mechanical age who can't put a fresh ribbon in their own typewriters and resounding authorities on the problem of the farmer who never even grew a geranium in a pot." *(Tom Wicker, Richard Cohen, Abe Rosenthal, Krauthammer, Kinsley, Tyrrell?)*

Pegler wrote in an era when there were a relative handful of nationally syndicated columnists, most of whom worked out of New York, not Washington; reporters who had graduated into what he termed the "vaudeville" of columnizing by virtue of a flair for language. From his early days as a wartime correspondent for Scripps Howard's United Press, "Peg" had that gift in abundance—what Farr described as "an ear for speech that touched the inner ear of the reader with the rhythms of ordinary conversation." Here is Westbrook Pegler on the litigious society, circa 1936:

> In deploring the ethics of the legal profession it is customary to forget that a large proportion of the citizens have become shyster-minded themselves and go through life hoping to be flicked on the flask by a rich man's limousine, disappointed in love, thrown out of a solvent hotel, insulted, libeled, frightened, humiliated or barked at by a dog whose owner lives in a big house. . . .
>
> A man crosses a street against a traffic light, leaps to avoid a car, barks his shin against a curb, yells murder with great presence of mind, demands an ambulance and . . . in due time his attorneys notify the attorneys for the insurance company that he has suffered great pain and will have to go on crutches the rest of his life, in addition to which his little woman has suffered his loss of services, the whole bill amounting to $100,000.

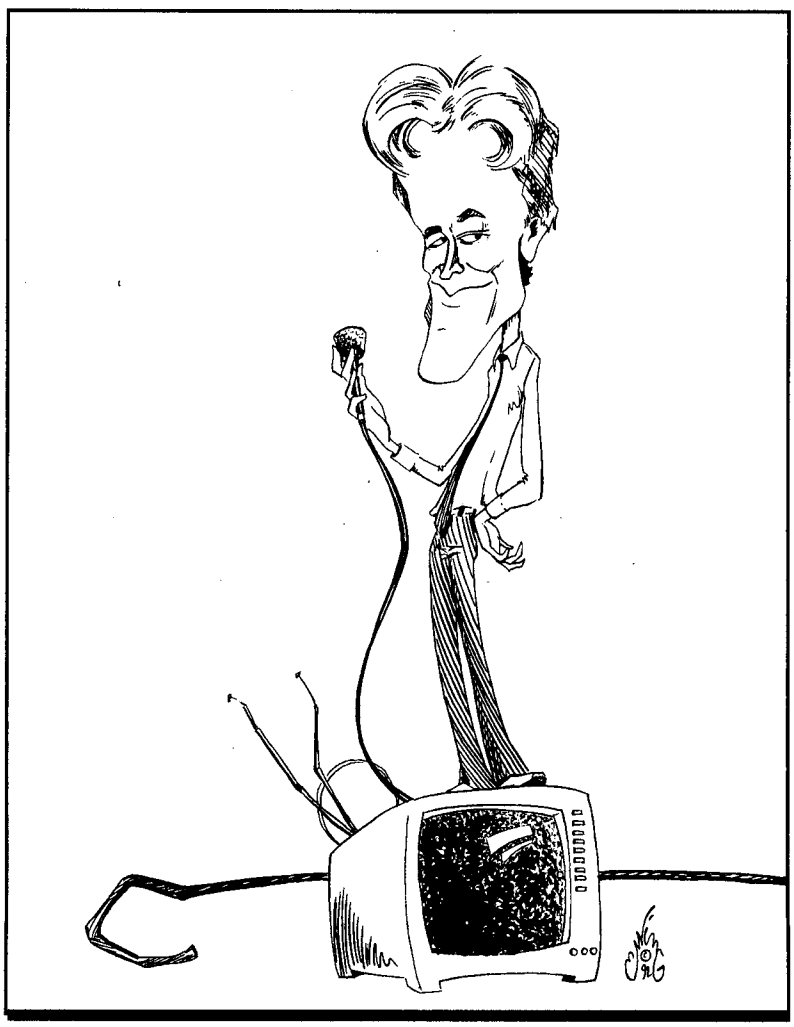
Add three zeroes and has anything changed?

Pegler was a populist, both in style and outlook. He was progenitor of a breed best represented in today's market by the heartland vaudevillian Mike Royko; though Royko, to be sure, is more the barroom word-jouster, not the kind of reportorial pit bull who could earn a Pulitzer by busting a union racketeer who, on being led off to prison, immortalized his nemesis with the cry, "I been peglerized!"

The phrase was apt. Once Pegler picked a target, he was relentless in pursuit, deadly in aim, with no verbal weapons barred; which is why I wish he were around today, to deal with David Duke in his own inimitable way, as he dealt with the riffraff of Baton Rouge in 1936: "They do not permit a house of prostitution to operate within a proscribed distance of Louisiana State University, but exempt the state Capitol from the meaning of the act."

You would think, given today's inflation in columnists/commentators/investigative reporters/analysts/talk show gabblers, and assorted other media mavens, that someone could come up with a line that good, if only on special occasions; but in journalism, as in all things contemporary, we have long since learned that more doesn't necessarily mean better.

Thus we see the national press pack, light and sound systems leading the way, in hard pursuit of David Duke; and pondering, in their thumb-sucker moments, the deeper meaning of his candidacy. Some say he has come this far because he strikes a populist chord in middle-class America; others, that he is the logical extension of the Willie Horton spot, i.e., what the power-famished radical left sees as the "racist" politics of the 1980s.



For my part, having cut eye-teeth as a thumb-sucking observer of Louisiana demagogues in the Depression and war years, I see no deeper meaning to what Ted Koppel, indeed, calls "the Duke phenomenon" than its being the latest product of a political media that feeds the public no-brain interviews and empty-calorie sound-bites.

Oh, that my favorite columnist of those early years were on the scene, tracking the Nazi Klansman to his lair or, in lieu thereof, his hair stylist. Have no doubt, the Duke of Hazard would be picked clean, and worse. He'd be peglerized. ❐

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The Rape's Progress

by Brock Yates

For those vacationing on Baffin Island during the month of December, it should be noted that William Kennedy Smith, an aspiring doctor and member of the famed Massachusetts kennel of party animals, was tried on and acquitted of the boozy beachfront hump of a young mother and socially eligible swinger from Jupiter, Florida, while he was weekending at the Kennedy oceanfront estate in Palm Beach. The star of the trial—besides the lipless, beady-eyed, shaggily coiffed defendant—was his famed uncle Teddy, the celebrated daredevil driver, nocturnal channel swimmer, and occasional senator from Massachusetts. This pair, coupled with a million bucks' worth of big-league legal muscle, managed to beat the rape rap, with the help of a prosecutor who made Perry Mason's most feeble opponent appear like Rudolph Giuliani. This gruesome little legal charade is past and might be forgotten, save for one salient question that demands to be answered: Was this yet another anti-Kennedy conspiracy?

Students of the legendary gang of siblings left by Bootlegger Joe are more than familiar with the tragedies that have befallen them at the hands of such evil characters as Lee Harvey Oswald, Sirhan Sirhan, Jack Daniel, Johnny Walker, and Old Granddad. Was this latest episode a cleverly choreographed plot to wreak more shame and havoc on a family whose woes have already gained a Grecian majesty?

One has only to examine the scholarship of such lucid thinkers as Oliver Stone, Mark Lane, Edward Jay Epstein, Harold Weisberg, and David S. Lifton to realize that this dynasty of patriots has been hectored by countless right-wing lunatics. (And the ingratitude of them! Papa Joe figured Adolf Hitler to be an okay guy, and Bobby and Jack were gritty anti-commies when it was politically expedient.) Compelling arguments that every rightist organization—from the CIA to the Mafia to the National Rifle Association to the Anti-Castro movement, to the editors of *Soldier of Fortune*, to the American Medical Association to Bert Parks and the Miss America Pageant to H.L. Hunt—was somehow involved in the plot(s) to bump off various Kennedys, even altering the road signs on Martha's Vineyard at the expense of poor Teddy and his hapless date.

Is it possible that the Smith rape episode was the latest attempt by a cabal of fascists to trip up America's dream family? For example: Why was poor Smith singled out on this particular night, when up and down the Palm Beach waterfront, under a glowing, moonlit sky, literally dozens of debs were being boffed on the beach by spoiled rich kids who had drunk themselves goofy at various Worth Avenue watering holes? What unknown stimulus caused the senator to leave the arms of his loving family and a round of simple table games to enter the smoky precincts of Au Bar with his son Patrick and Smith? Was he lured there by sinister forces out to entrap him and thereby discredit his easily anticipated defense of Anita Hill and other harassed females?

Surely these coincidences cannot be shoved under the rug like the proved existence of five CIA-hired Mafia hit men photographed (and later interviewed by Phil Donahue) on Dallas's Grassy Knoll, all armed with bazookas supplied by troops loyal to General Edwin Walker, or the fact that Lee Harvey Oswald was personally brainwashed by William Casey and Regis Philbin, a man who has numbed more senses than even Larry King on a good night.

And what about the allegations that the prosecutor, Moira Lasch, was spotted in a Washington supermarket buying Duncan Hines cake mix several days prior to Robert McFarlane's infamous trip to the Middle East? If that doesn't scream conspiracy, then Oliver Stone isn't the crusading filmmaker we know and love.

Sadly, Willie Smith was a victim of this entire, sordid episode. Surely the senior senator from Massachusetts was the target, and had he not been "overserved" at Au Bar it is likely that the CIA-hired hit-hooker would have nailed him instead of his nephew. That these jarring pieces of evidence were forbidden as testimony for the defense is only further validation of the right-wing mania of the state of Florida, where such fascist atrocities as the death penalty, the 65-mph speed limit, manatee genocide, and the conversion of precious swampland into theme parks have long placed the Sunshine State among the most corrupt Caribbean banana republics.

But who was the mysterious CIA hooker? More than an obscure young mother from Jupiter on a toot, of that we can be sure. There is little question that she had been carefully trained in barroom confabulations with besotted 60-year-old lechers, and it is a fortunate twist of fate that the senator's last fifth of scotch was sufficient to render him *hors de combat* for the evening. Otherwise it would have been his large, pink Irish body that would have been shorn of its beach towel and violated on his own lawn. Perish the thought!

We want to know where such self-righteous protectors of individual rights as Senators Orrin Hatch and Alan Simpson stand, now that these stunning aspects of the case have been revealed. Perhaps they were too chastened by their detestable anti-feminist posturing during the Thomas hearings to rise to the defense of a fellow senator in his hour of need. Or were they, too, conspirators, seeking revenge for the gallant rebuttals issued by Ted Kennedy in his advocacy of Professor Hill. We demand an answer!

This case is not about to die in the hearts and minds of right-thinking Americans. For those concerned citizens eager to pursue justice, a meeting of the "Fair Treatment of the Kennedys Committee" is scheduled for next Tuesday at Palm Beach's Au Bar. The senator himself will be the keynote speaker, but please come early. (You know how he gets.) And bring a date. ❐

Brock Yates is the author, most recently, of Enzo Ferrari: The Man, the Cars, the Races *(Doubleday).*

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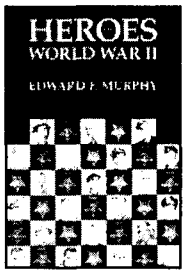

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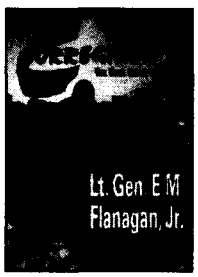

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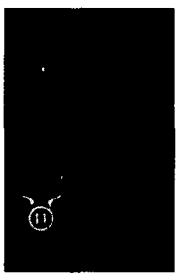

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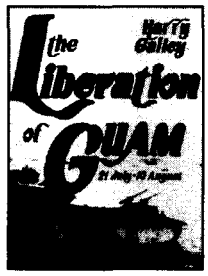

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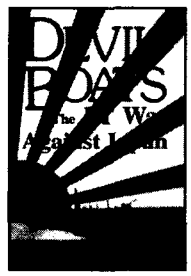

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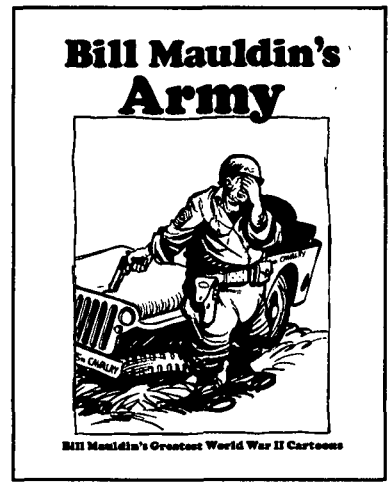

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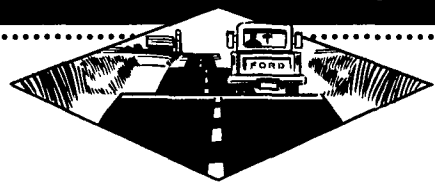

Mr. Term Limits

by Vincent Carroll

For a party that hasn't controlled both houses of Congress in nearly forty years, let alone most state capitals, Republicans are remarkably short of new ideas and innovative leaders. In Pete Wilson, California has been seized by a Democratic thinkalike on taxes, while Louisiana's premier GOP attraction of late has been a bigot with broadcast-booth looks. Meanwhile, former attorney general Richard Thornburgh's defeat in Pennsylvania only consolidates the GOP's recent record of utter fecklessness in Senate races.

To be sure, there are bright spots. First-term governors William Weld of Massachusetts and John Engler of Michigan have faced down the spending lobbies and trimmed government—to popular acclaim. Tommy Thompson of Wisconsin helped create Milwaukee's experiment with school vouchers. And Jack Kemp still pushes empowerment of the poor and tax cuts to encourage economic growth. For the most part, though, stand-patters reign, due less to what they stand for than what they stand against—Democrats.

"The good news is the Democrats are out of gas, and that creates an opportunity," says Terry Considine, Republican state senator from suburban Denver. "But that's an opportunity for Democrats or Republicans. We are equally out of gas. My crucial question for the Republican party is: What are we for? I believe in a big tent, but I don't believe in incoherence." Considine is going to challenge liberal Colorado Sen. Tim Wirth in this year's election, but he's already a national leader—perhaps *the* national leader, if measured by results—in the movement for term limitations.

It's not that Considine considers term limits a political cure-all. But without them, he fears, there is far less chance of wresting control of government from career politicians whose world revolves around the public sector and who regard bureaucrats and lobbyists—not taxpayers—as their main constituents. More than one study backs him in his belief that the longer people serve in Congress, the more likely they are to adopt statist views.

Considine knows that even with term limits, incumbents will still win most elections. Incumbency has always been an advantage, but at least in earlier times officeholders were much more likely to step down on their own or be denied renomination. In the nineteenth century, it was common to serve only four years in the House and six in the Senate. The point of term limits, Considine believes, is to put politicians in better touch with voters by reviving political competition and hence public interest in elections.

Although term limits are only a modest part of Considine's political agenda, they provide a case study of the 44-year-old businessman's operating style, which is to end-run the establishment whenever it stands in his way. "Almost any major social changes—environmentalism, feminism, civil rights, Mothers Against Drunk Driving—come from the bottom up," he says. "That's how real political reform occurs, too." In Colorado, Considine dutifully tried to pursue term limits through official channels. He introduced a constitutional amendment in the Republican-dominated legislature, but careerists in both parties promptly sunk their knives into it. So Considine launched Coloradans Back in Charge, a citizens' group that gathered signatures, put the proposal on the 1990 ballot, and pushed it to a 71 percent electoral rout.

Oklahoma and California also clamped limits on state terms in 1990, but only Considine's measure established limits on U.S. congressional seats. In November, the movement suffered its first major defeat, in Washington state, where the initiative went much further than Considine thought prudent: it attempted to apply limits (severe ones, at that) retroactively, opening the way to a skilled counter-campaign led by the beloved House Speaker Tom Foley. Nevertheless, between ten and fifteen states are likely to vote this year on term limits, including Florida, Arizona, Washington (again), Arkansas, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. Maine, Idaho, and Nevada are remote possibilities, and California may vote on whether to limit congressional terms.

None of these states is likely to apply the limits retroactively, but virtually all will extend the limits to Congress. The movement is also humming along in some non-initiative states, where citizens groups are collecting signatures to use in lobbying lawmakers to approve state constitutional amendments that can then be put to voters for final ratification. Texas may hold a non-binding referendum on the issue.

It's not by accident that Colorado's amendment has become something of a national model. Taking advantage of growing national revulsion with Congress, Considine prodded the movement along by transforming Coloradans Back in Charge into Americans Back in Charge, whose two staffers, along with several allies around the country, dispense tactical and financial aid to grassroots campaigns nationwide. (The only other group of comparable influence is the Committee for Congressional Reform, an arm of the D.C.-based Citizens for a Sound Economy.) "We offer people who can fly in and dispense advice," says Shari Williams of Americans Back in Charge. "Sometimes we give money, but this is a very fragmented movement, so we don't go in and run campaigns—and we don't help at all unless the organization is bipartisan. If it's not a grassroots movement that will live on its own, then we think it's destined to fail."

The movement faces two huge obstacles: only twenty-three states (and the District of Columbia) allow voter initiatives, and the Supreme Court could declare state limits on congressional seats unconstitutional. Considine argues that twenty-three initiative states is enough to provide a critical mass of officeholders who in time will push a constitutional amendment through

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Vincent Carroll is editorial page editor of the Rocky Mountain News.

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Congress for ratification by the states, on the assumption that opposing term limits will become an ever-growing political liability. He also argues that "we could lose the legal question and still win the political argument," citing the 17th Amendment, which requires the popular election of senators. It passed only after courts struck down early attempts by individual states to require such elections.

Although Republicans have the most to gain from term limits, the movement is by no means a conservative cause exclusively. In Washington state, the ballot movement was led by a liberal, Sherry Bockwinkel, and enjoyed the backing of some feminists and minority spokesmen. Democrats like Jerry Brown, Sen. Harris Wofford, and former Vermont governor Madeleine Kunin have also endorsed the idea. Polls show that support for limits cuts across party lines. According to Considine, the real clash in American politics is now between outsiders and insiders, and he expects that underdog candidates will find it useful to back term limits—as, for example, Wofford did in his race against the self-proclaimed Washington insider Richard Thornburgh. The disgraced former House Majority Whip Tony Coelho knew what was up when he predicted, "Unless something drastic is done, term limits are going to sweep the country. Challengers will pledge support, incumbents will have to follow suit, and before you know it we could see it in the Constitution."

As it happens, Republicans had the most to lose from term limits in Colorado, where they greatly outnumber Democrats in the legislature. Considine plunged ahead, regardless—not surprising for someone in whom distaste for go-along, get-along colleagues erupts with convincing regularity. "I have less trouble with a dedicated liberal, someone with a coherent set of principles and values—a Moynihan, for example—than a Republican who is primarily concerned about his own re-election," he says. "That's why this is not a partisan movement. George Will [a recent convert] applies the functional test in promoting term limits that the present system isn't working. That's okay, but it isn't enough. Even if the system worked, it still wouldn't be self-governance to rely on a professional class of politicians."

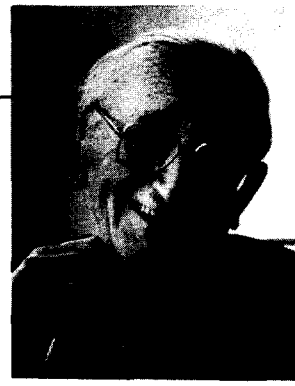
Considine's distaste for the state of American politics has also soured him on political action committees. "In theory I'm for them. It's just that in practice they don't work." He would ban not only campaign contributions from PACs, but also any out-of-state contributions to local races, in order to limit the influence of national interest groups. Since there's no hope of getting such a proposal through the Colorado legislature, he has toyed with organizing another petition drive and putting the plan on the ballot.

Reform became Considine's passion only after he concluded that the present system was fundamentally corrupt, incapable of dealing decisively with such problems as education, productivity, and the collapse of the family. The turning point for him came in 1984, when, as manager of then-Senator William Armstrong's re-election campaign, he commuted regularly to Washington for a GOP campaign training school and spent a great deal of time observing Congress. "It was appalling," he says. "They were working at cross-purposes to the economy, and they didn't even care."

Prior to 1984 he had only dabbled in politics. Born to a well-off family in San Diego, Considine sailed through Groton, Harvard, and Harvard Law, and by his mid-twenties he directed a $60 million investment company listed on the New York Stock Exchange. In 1981 he moved to Colorado, where today he runs Cairn Co., oneof the country's largest property management firms. But Considine's business successes were not immediately matched by political ones. In 1986 he badly overreached when he decided to run for the U.S. Senate seat being vacated by Gary Hart. Not only did he fail to win the Republican nomination, he couldn't even attract the 20 percent of state assembly votes needed to force a primary. It was not an elegant campaign. Considine flip-flopped on the death penalty. Then, despite his sympathy for illegal aliens and his support of liberal immigration quotas, he used the word "wetback" when discussing immigration policy. He caused resentment by spending money like a sheik—$1.1 million of his own—on a media blitz months before a possible primary. Even the support of Senator Armstrong backfired. It left the impression that Considine, who is the son-in-law of Howard "Bo" Callaway, then the GOP state chairman, was not his own man. A convention button said it all: "Say no-no to Bill and Bo." Which delegates did, nominating instead the awkward U.S. Rep. Ken Kramer, who lost to Tim Wirth in a lackluster campaign.

In 1987, Considine took another gamble when his district's state senator suddenly resigned. Warning against Republican complacency in a riveting speech before the

(continued on page 65)



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Breathless

by Benjamin J. Stein

Friday

Everyone here has the flu and I thought I might be getting it, too. Hence a trip to Doctor B., who had been recommended by my friend Traci, a former cheerleader who now sells advertising space in a magazine (which in today's world is a good hard sell).

Doctor B. was in a tiny suite in the Century City Hospital. His waiting room was filled with issues of *Cosmopolitan*, *Vogue*, *Bazaar*, and *Elle*. Next to me on the couch sat a scared-looking teenage girl, idly thumbing through *Sassy*, yet another magazine. She was called in to see the doctor while I read my *Wall Street Journal*. I often think that each day's *Journal* could be summarized in a few words: "Today there were some good people who made a lot of money and some bad people who made a lot of money, and it's very hard to tell which is which."

As I read, the two receptionists painted their nails and talked in normal tones, which I could easily overhear. "Did you check out the woman who just went in to see the doctor?" the first receptionist asked.

"Yeah," the other one said. "She was raped and then she got herpes and now it's spread all over her body and she's like having a nervous breakdown."

"Wow," said the first one, "and her Dad is that really famous lawyer in Beverly Hills."

Hmmm. Next time I go to see the doctor, I think I'll give a false name. Still, it's good to know, in our anonymous society, that someone is paying attention.

Doctor B. was a portly man with a kindly look and steel wire-rimmed spectacles. In his examining room were still more piles of *Vogue*, *Elle*, *Cosmo*, and *Sassy*. I told him I had been feeling extremely fatigued. Perhaps it was depression, perhaps flu. Might he want to examine me?

"I don't need to examine you," Doctor B. said. "I can tell you're extremely fatigued. Here's what I'll do. I'll give you dexamethasone, and that'll help you for a week or two."

"Isn't that a cortisone drug?" I asked.

"Yes, that's exactly what it is, and I think you have a low-grade virus and this'll help you."

"Uhh, don't cortisone drugs suppress immune reaction and help the virus spread?" I asked shyly.

Doctor B. looked at me angrily. "It's not a long-term cure," he said evenly. "But it has a tonic effect and it'll help you get back your energy for a week, so that if you have to play Vegas or something you can get through it."

"If I have to play Vegas?"

"Yeah. I know you're some kind of actor, and this is in case you have to play a week's gig in Vegas, say."

Very nice. I didn't want to say any more. I paid my $112 and went on my way. As I was leaving, a receptionist said, "Don't you play on 'Charles in Charge'?"

"No," I said. "That's someone else. I'm in the folding box business."

Saturday

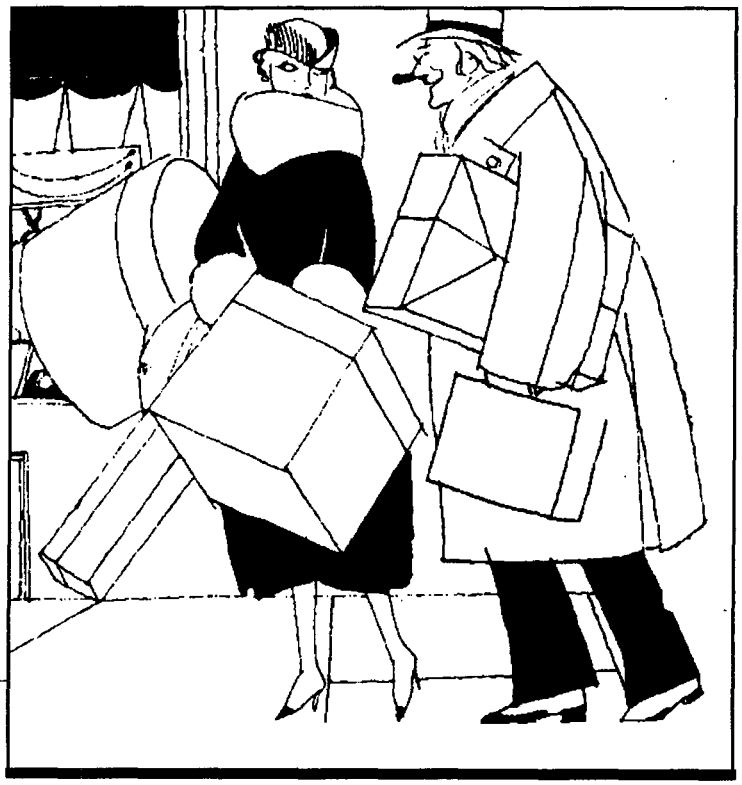
Through a friend, I was invited to take part in a transpacific Town Meeting of the Air, in which about a hundred Americans in Los Angeles got to ask questions of a group of supposedly influential and powerful Jap-anese in Tokyo.

The hookup, at KABC, was complex and did not always work, but eventually we started to talk to the Japanese. A sample of how the evening went:

The Japanese host, a veritable caricature of a Japanese by the name of Tomio, would look into the camera and say, "Do you Americans think we Japanese work too hard?"

Various members of our group would say that we thought it was great that the Japanese worked so hard and we wished more Americans worked hard. Tomio would look at the camera again and say, "So you think we work too hard and you hate us for it?"

Then some of us would say, "No, we don't think that. We sympathize with your working



Benjamin J. Stein is a writer, lawyer, economist, and actor living in Malibu, California.

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so hard. Some of us work very hard as well."

Then Tomio would say, "So, you don't hate us. You feel sorry for us. You pity us."

So it went for about an hour. Another sample exchange. Tomio asks us, "Are you angry at us over our trade policies?"

Some of us would say yes and some would say no. Then Tomio would nod and say, "So you hate us for our trade policies." Then someone (actually yours truly) said, "I personally love the way you ship us all of those great CD players for so cheap and those great cars that never break, but it would be good if you bought some of our rice and, anyway, how big a trade surplus do you really need? Is that truly maximizing your welfare?"

Tomio would nod and then say, "So you think we are exploiting you by selling you cheap CD players."

I left at the break, but it was a startling and scary insight into cultural differences and into what goes on in people's brains when they actually want to feel angry and cheated. Still, what great CD players they make.

Sunday

The handsomest boy on the face of the earth, Tommy, my little angel boy sent from heaven, came into my room while I was watching a TV show about the collapse of American moral values, brought to me straight from the American Enterprise Institute by C-SPAN. Tommy was holding in his hand a little plastic rocket. He showed it to me menacingly.

"What's that, my boy?" I asked.

"It's a nuclear bomb, to kill you," he said gleefully.

Tommy is only four, but he has a lot of good ideas. I've often considered giving him his own gun so that if his teacher disrespects him, he can blow her away and put a stop to that kind of dissing right away.

"Tommy," I said, "it's good that you have your own nuclear bomb at four, but you should never tell Daddy you're going to kill him."

He thought for just an instant and then said, "Okay, Daddy, I'll surprise you."

Dinner at Granita with Jane, my friend from Malibu. Granita is an exuberant room, with fish tanks and seashells embedded in the walls, a free-form shape like one large calculus problem, and, late at night, with almost no one in the room except Jane and me.

"I'm upset," she said. "I'm almost suicidal. It's because the guy I was dating told me I was more likely to be killed by a terrorist than to get married."

"He's crazy," I said. "You're a great woman and every man I know of likes you."

Jane virtually beamed and as she did, over to our table came Barbara Lazaroff, the co-owner and designer of Granita. We talked about all of the rich women who come into the place for lunch on a daily basis and then about pediatricians, and then Barbara left.

"Now I feel suicidal again," Jane said. "I'm in a shame spiral."

"A 'shame spiral'?"

"Yes, that's when different parts of shame come at me from all different directions and pull me down."

"I see."

"Yes," she said, obviously warming to the topic, "a shame spiral over being single, not being rich, all that shame stuff. Down, down, down."

Wow, wow, wow, I thought to my little self, someone is making a fortune off of that phrase. "Shame spiral." I LIKE IT. →

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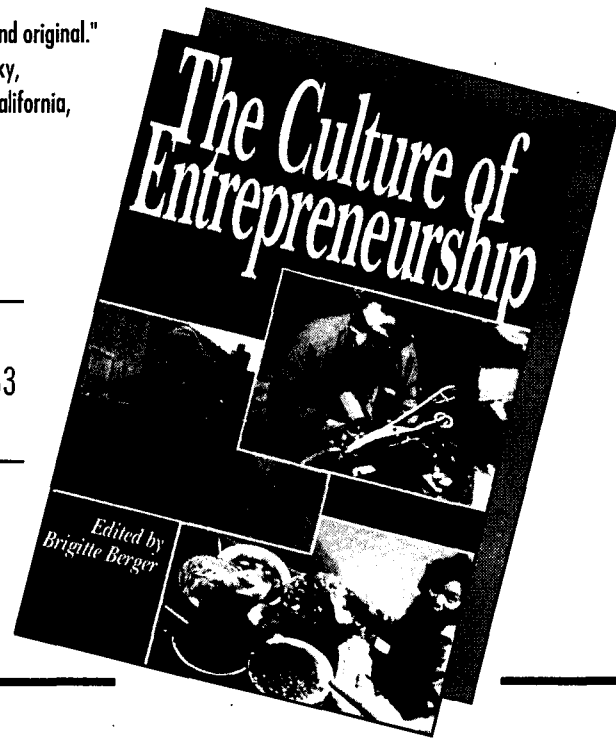

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Tuesday

A pitch at ABC. The meeting came about because a month ago, a very smart fellow named Sandy approached me with an idea for a sitcom. It would be set at a strip shopping center in a marginal big-city area, like Sixth Avenue in Los Angeles. There would be a black man with a rib joint, a Korean with a photo shop, a Russian Jewish immigrant with a shoe repair shop, and a bookstore and card shop run by two gay men. This, you see, is America right here and now.

The twist is that the black rib joint owner would be kind of reactionary, saying very sensible things. Sandy, a veteran sitcom writer, thought I could write such a character, and we had great hopes for the show. We took it to Castle Rock, a major league film and TV production company, and thence to ABC. Our man at Castle Rock said he thought it could be a 50-share show. He used his power and prestige to get us a meeting at ABC, to pitch the concept and hope for a deal for at least a pilot script.

Now, your humble servant has been to many a pitch at ABC. They're located in a big building in Century City, and they have a reception room at least three stories high, with a massive double reception desk and huge, outsized couches lining the walls. It's all supposed to awe the visitor, and it used to do just that.

But today something is different. For one thing, consider the deli in the lobby of the building. Traditionally, producers and writers hang out there for breakfast of lox and bagels or a nosh of something before the pitch. You see your pals there, sitting by the aquarium, giving each other pep talks. It's like the lobby of a hotel during a tire salesmen's convention. Only today, Sandy and I were the only people in the deli. It was eerily dim and dusty. No other producers and writers.

Likewise the reception area. Until recently, there'd be two attractive women at the double desk. Now there's one Hispanic male wearing the uniform of a temporary security service. There was no one else waiting there to pitch. The whole room was sadly empty, like a bus station late at night.

We were summoned to give our pitch. Our listeners were two young men. They talked with us about photography for a few minutes, and then about their kids and our kids, and then we gave our pitch. But the atmosphere in the room was distracted, somehow empty, as if a giant pump had pumped the enthusiasm out of the ABC Entertainment Center. The listeners, obviously smart and well informed, were somehow absent and mentally not in the room. It was as if everyone there, including me,

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was in deep mourning over some tragedy.

I tried to liven things up by speaking forcefully about the education crisis and the dependency crisis. No luck. I tried making provocative comments about young Americans. Ditto. About prime time. No response. There's something happening here. What it is ain't exactly clear. Finally, we got up, cooed over a woman executive's baby, and then went away in our separate cars. Beggars in Porsches, BMWs, and battered Acuras.

I met a friend for lunch in Beverly Hills. I was early, so I walked down Beverly Drive. It was only two weeks before Christmas, but the stores were empty. Many were boarded up. The whole town had a hollow look, as if someone somewhere was pumping out all the oxygen and no one, not even the tough, vicious women of Beverly Hills, can catch a breath.

In my wildest nightmares, I could not have imagined how this town would be flattened by the recession. One joke making the rounds is that in Los Angeles houses are like horses: you can buy them, but you can't sell them. Another: L.A. is Homeowner's Motel: buyers check in, but they don't check out.

Even at Morton's, where I had dinner, everyone was whining about the recession. The cheapest entrée is about $20, a glass of wine is $7, and people were wolfing it all down and crying at the same time. Kirk Kerkorian was sitting next to us. He looked worried. There were three studio heads around us. They all looked sad. Even here, there wasn't enough oxygen.

A., a TV producer and my host, said his studio wasn't paying its employees promptly. He had enough in the bank for now, but where would his next deal come from? "Surely," he said, "two guys as smart as us can figure out a way to scam this town."

"I don't want to think of a scam," I said. "I want a good night's sleep."

On my way out, a young waiter stopped me. "Maybe there's a way we could collaborate on a script," he said. "I have some great ideas, and we'd be a perfect team. You're at the twilight of your career and I'm just starting mine."

When I got home, I found a package from my agent. It was a script, and the note said I was wanted at Fox the next day to audition for the part of a toy designer who comes up with one of those realistic false piles of vomit, except his has wholesome modern vegetables like avocado in it instead of the usual peas and carrots. As an alternative, I could read for the part of the toy factory foreman who's about to be fired and is pleading for his job. ❐

PRESSWATCH

The Deep Six

by Terry Eastland

Time to review the bulging files of this presswatcher, and what do I find? Lots of stories that have been underplayed, misplayed, curiously played, or not played at all. The Big Six among them:

The Deficit

In his annual mid-year fiscal review in 1990, budget director Richard G. Darman projected that the deficit for Fiscal Year 1991 would be $231 billion—the biggest ever, in dollar terms. In October, an administration urged on by the press (and Darman) cut a budget deal that would supposedly reduce the deficit by $482 billion over five years. Instead, the opposite is occurring: the deficit for FY 1991 came in at $268.7 billion, and Darman's office projects the deficit for FY 1992 to roll in at $348.3 billion. That's $70 billion more than projected when President Bush signed the "deficit reduction" package; watch for a revised (upward) figure soon. The press has duly reported that the budget pact hasn't succeeded on its own terms and given the various explanations, such as the extra costs of public assistance and the S&L bailout.

But there's been no hue and cry in the press, as there was in 1990, over all the awful things the deficit is supposed to do to the economy ("Deficitology," "The Coming Budget Disaster," "Yes to Taxes," opined the *Washington Post* in 1990). Nor has the press paid much attention to the ill effects of the budget pact upon the economy; instead, the focus has often been on how the budget deal has too severely con-

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strained the spending appetite ("The Law That Ate the Future," editorialized the *New York Times*). Nor have reporters fed on Dick Darman (perhaps because they feed *from* him). John Sununu got front-page news for his travel, but Darman goes unnoticed despite an economic forecasting record unmatched for its sheer magnitude of error.

The word now is that Darman wants to hold another "bipartisan budget summit" in 1993. Assuming Darman—and Bush—are still around, expect the budget again to become a big deal in the press—so long as higher taxes are the likely outcome. But don't expect any follow-up on the damage new taxes will cause the economy.

Reregulation.

The press did a good job covering deregulation, begun during the Carter presidency and continued under Reagan, which by 1988 had cut the amount of annual rule-making by almost 40 percent from 1981 levels. Under Bush, however, the trend has been reversed. Rule-making in the Federal Register reached 67,000 pages in 1991, *up* from 55,000 in 1988. Darman is also part of the story, having allowed Congress to neutralize his Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, which during the Reagan years proved an effective check upon the regulatory tendencies of executive agencies by insisting on a cost-benefit analysis. It was the late Warren Brookes who first spotted the story of reregulation, but not until December 1991, when the *National Journal* made "The Regulatory President" a cover story, did a news organization devote substantial coverage to it. Maybe now the story will reach the daily press. If so, the impact of reregulation ought to lead the press to the unreported story of the zero-growth economy. We've had one for three years now, longer than any period since the Depression.

Acid Rain

In 1980 Congress created the National Acid Precipitation Assessment Program (NAPAP) to determine the truth about acid rain. In the fall of 1990, NAPAP reported its conclusion, namely that acid rain has caused far less damage to the nation's forests and lakes than was previously estimated. Although the NAPAP study involved 700 of the nation's leading scientists and cost $500 million, its politically untenable findings explain why it got almost no notice in the press, apart from a segment on CBS's "60 Minutes." After all, for more than a decade all kinds of media have told us of the Apocalypse Awaiting: "Scourge from the Skies" (*Reader's Digest*), "Acid from the Skies" (*Time*), and "Rain of Terror" (*Field and Stream*).

In January 1991, reporting on the lack of reporting on the NAPAP study, Howard Kurtz, the *Washington Post*'s press writer, asked *Post* environmental writer Michael Weisskopf why the paper had ignored it. A less aggressive understanding of journalism one cannot imagine: "He said many people involved in the acid rain debate told him it had little news value." Also of "little news value," apparently, was the effort by the Environmental Protection Agency to discredit the work of one of the principal contributors to the NAPAP study, a soil scientist named Edward Krug. In January the EPA put out word that Krug is "on the fringes of environmental science and policy making," and that he has "limited scientific credibility even in the limited area of surface water acidification." Not until the spring was the EPA questioned by anyone in the press about its campaign against Krug, whose work effectively calls into question certain provisions of the Clean Air Act. EPA Administrator William Reilly calls that law "the environmental flagship of this administration"; obviously, the flag on the flagship must be saluted.

Global Warming

The National Academy of Sciences issued two reports on this subject last year. The first, in April, said that there is no evidence that global warming is anything but the natural variability of the temperature cycles; that none of the climate models used to predict the greenhouse effect provides a "reliable forecast"; and that, "despite the great uncertainties, greenhouse warming is a potential threat sufficient to justify action now." This report was widely but badly covered, as the press ignored the first two points to emphasize the need for "action now." The second study, in September, observed that the economy could adapt and even benefit from a gradual warming. Big news, you would think, but only the Associated Press, the *Chicago Tribune*, and the *New York Times* saw fit to cover it.

Dioxin

For years the chemical compound dioxin was Toxic Enemy No. 1, "the most potent carcinogen ever tested." Its deadly reputation derived from its ability, even in very small doses, to cause cancer in laboratory animals. In 1982, the federal government

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permanently evacuated all 2,240 residents of Times Beach, Missouri, whose soil showed traces of dioxin; the nearby Syntex Corporation was blamed, and in 1990 it agreed to spend as much as $200 million over the next decade to clean up the mess. But last April, the government official who originally recommended the evacuation, Dr. Vernon Houk of the Centers for Disease Control, publicly acknowledged that the science he thought supported his conclusion was faulty. The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reported the news in a front-page story under a banner headline. ABC News gave it a mention, but that was about it—until August 15, when the *New York Times* published an excellent front-page story (with sidebar it came to sixty-five column inches) by Keith Schneider, "U.S. Officials Say Dangers of Dioxin Exaggerated." The piece reported that the EPA was reviewing the risks of dioxin, since exposure to the chemical was "now considered by some experts to be no more risky than spending a week sunbathing."

As the *Times* reported, "If Dr. Houk is right and dioxin is much less dangerous than had been determined, that could mean the Government's regulations for other compounds will need to be adjusted." Here is a story begging for big-time reporting—the bad science informing so many EPA regulations.

Race-Norming

On May 30, 1990, Robert Holland of the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* became the first journalist I've come across to write about the Labor Department's practice of racially rigging the results of the General Aptitude Test Battery Examination (GATBE), a test taken by 600,000 people annually in thirty states. Holland did so on the editorial pages of his newspaper, after getting hold of the conversion tables by which a black applicant for a blue-collar job is awarded a percentile score of 87, a Hispanic 74, a white 47, and an Asian 47—four separate scores for the same number of right answers. Holland came across the story locally. The Virginia Employment Commission administered the race-normed GATBE to job seekers and reported results to would-be employers, many of whom were under legal pressures to hire and promote by race. The piece caused a public outcry throughout the state, leading the employment commission to drop the GATBE. Holland deserves a Pulitzer. His story also drew some national attention, as the "Today" show, NBC News, the *Washington Post*, and the *New York Times* did pieces. Amazing, when you consider that race-norming had been around for ten years, having been set in motion under Carter and implemented by the ostensibly anti-quota Reagan Administration. The round of news stories emboldened an administration publicly opposed to quotas to place the Labor policy under "review." When House Republicans early last year pushed to include a measure outlawing race-norming in the new "civil rights" bill, no Democrat dared defend the practice. The mix of Labor review and Democratic unwillingness to support race-norming caught the press unprepared. Only Peter Brown of Scripps Howard, author of *Minority Party: Why Democrats Face Defeat in 1992 and Beyond*, devoted much attention to the subject.

The lack of coverage illustrates not only how poorly the press covers the bureaucracy but also how incurious it is about the instrumentalities by which government makes employers count and hire by race. Most of all, however, noncoverage comes down to the journalistic profession's being in basic sympathy with employment preferences. This fall I was sent documents—evidently from a conservative whistleblower at the EPA—indicating the agency's efforts to hire and promote by quota. There are countless similar stories out there in governmentland. All they need is a Bob Holland or Peter Brown who would write them. ❐

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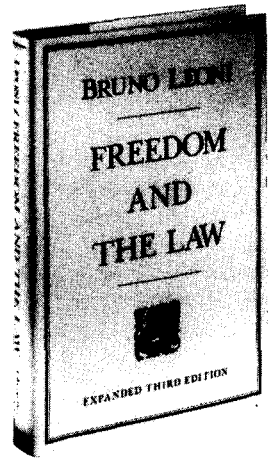

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Hard Times

by Cathy Young

On my very first night in Moscow (November 22), I turned on the television news to hear the anchors refer to "the republics of the former Soviet Union." My entry visa, which said "USSR," had been issued by a non-existent state for travel to a country with no name.

With private enterprise springing up in the wasteland that was the Soviet economy, Russia is now a textbook case of a society sharply divided into the very rich (often former *nomenklatura* men and their offspring) and the very poor (about 90 percent of the population, by the latest official estimates). In between is a tiny—though, one must hope, growing—middle class, with ties to the burgeoning private sector or a network of personal connections or one of the few remaining state-sector jobs that provide a decent livelihood.

Turn on the TV in Moscow, and in little time you will see a commercial, either for a Western product (such as Colgate toothpaste, though the purpose of such advertising is beyond me) or, more commonly, for a Russian financial firm. These maiden hymns to Russian capitalism are distinguished by an amateurish quality and a preternaturally majestic tone: against grainy footage of waves crashing against a rock, a voice sounding like that of il Commendatore in the final scene of *Don Giovanni* thunders, "In these turbulent times, find stability with XYZ Brokerage Company!"

Meanwhile, many state-run stores no longer bother to open, which is at least honest; the dimly lit, dingy, empty premises visible through the shop-windows are an eerie sight. An open dairy store on the Arbat, in the heart of Moscow, was so crowded I decided against making my way to the counter to see what was available. The rancid smell did not bode any good. A drained-looking woman shopper said to no one in particular, "No, it's time to throw these new guys out, too."

In a foodstore a ten-minute metro ride away from the Kremlin, the shelves were quite bare except in the "commercial section," which has unregulated prices. A middle-aged woman in a worn coat stood for a while eyeing the kielbasa, then sighed wistfully, "Forty-five a kilo! Lord, it looks good." While I stood fingering the rubles in my purse and inwardly debating whether or not it was awkward to offer charity to a total stranger, she drifted off, looking lost.

This is *not* psychological resistance to market prices; after months of botched shock therapy, most people will gladly buy whatever they can afford. In the New Arbat supermarket, salami at 87 rubles a kilo drew an impressive line (in a city where 250 rubles a week is considered a pretty good salary), and a friend told me of seeing about 300 people queued up for butter at 50 a kilo. By now, that's below average. Some educated Russians like to snort that Americans talk about nothing but money, but snippets of conversations caught in the streets of Moscow these days are likely to be about prices or rationing coupons.

While headlines in some local papers are trumpeting nothing short of hunger in Moscow, even many of my Russian acquaintances, not at all optimism-prone, chafe at such sensationalism. One should not forget the stockpiles of food in people's apartments and the food packages distributed at work (some of the budding private employers advertising for help list food, along with medical care, among the fringe benefits). Still, the shortages are increasing. One of my hostesses, a music professor, moaned over two eggs dropped on the kitchen floor and did her best to scoop up the remains into a plastic bag. A leading journalist from the *Literary Gazette* commented as she served the butter, "Well, this is probably all the butter we'll have until next spring." Minutes later, she inquired solicitously, "Why aren't you taking any butter?" (This is a very Russian story.)

For people with money, there seems to be more to buy than there was a year ago. Vending stalls offer such things as Chinese tea at 20 rubles for a pack of twenty teabags (the exchange rate went from 70 to 90 rubles per dollar in the eighteen days I was there); cigarettes at 25 rubles for a pack of Winstons and 50 for Marlboros; socks, underwear, and pantyhose at 40 to 60 rubles; condoms, Russian-made with an Austrian license, at 20 rubles a twelve-pack; and so forth.

And that's to say nothing of people who, by working for foreign companies or in other ways, have hard currency. The Irish House, a new hard-currency supermarket in central Moscow, generally overpriced but decently stocked, was filled with mostly quite unglamorous Russians; on a Saturday, there were enough of them to form lines. Some souvenir sellers on the Arbat pedestrian mall are still furtive about taking dollars, with plainclothesmen presumably lurking about. Yet numerous ads for goods and services such as the rental and sale of apartments, whether in the classified columns or in metro stations, matter-of-factly state, "for SKV," the Russian abbreviation for "freely convertible currency"; more tellingly yet, other ads specify, "for rubles." A woman living in midtown Moscow told me of a handwritten sign she saw in a dry-cleaning establishment: PLEASE DO NOT STUFF DOLLARS IN THE VENT—apparently a hiding place favored by Arbat peddlers, which had already provoked several fights.

Among the hottest items now sold on the Arbat are Communist memorabilia: large banners with such logos as THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GREAT OCTOBER SOCIALIST REVOLUTION; *Distinguished Collective of Communist Labor* pennants (I bought one of those, with a Lenin profile and the inscription *Communist labor will triumph—V. I. Lenin*); and the

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Cathy Young, our regular Soviet Press-watch columnist, is the author of Growing Up in Moscow *(Ticknor & Fields).*

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like. I remembered my Polaroid shot with a Gorby cutout from last year and wanted one with Yeltsin. To my surprise, the two fellows taking Polaroids here had a very nice Gorby as well as Mickey Mouse and Goofy—but no Yeltsin. When I asked why not, one of the fellows grinned: "Yeltsin? How do you want him, live and wrapped up?" On Pushkin Square, too, there was Gorby but no Boris in sight, making me wonder if this signaled a fading of Yeltsin's heroic post-August aura. (Not that the Gorby cutout should be seen as a sign of popularity: a photo with him, explained Boris Pinsker, a radical Moscow economist, is of some interest as a curio.)

With the post-coup euphoria long gone, the only rallies likely to be seen in Moscow these days are those of marginal groups, such as gays and hardline Communists. (One Sunday, reported the Moscow daily *Kuranty*, the two above-mentioned groups of marchers ran into each other near Red Square, leading to an exchange of uncomplimentary remarks; the gays, who carried such signs as "The Condom Is the Key to Our Future," taunted the Communists by handing them inflated red condoms.) On the second day of my stay, I attended a gathering of political parties meeting to discuss the idea of convening a Constituent Assembly so that the entire Soviet political system could be decisively scrapped for a fresh start.

For several hours, there were earnest discussions and debates about the representation of delegates and parties, voting eligibility, and other procedural matters. Afterwards, I asked one of the chief proponents of the Constituent Assembly, St. Petersburg politician Marina Sallier, if the weary public could really be mobilized for yet another massive voting campaign. Sallier, a gray-haired lady whose grandmotherly smile masks a keen mind and a spine of steel, acknowledged that it might be difficult. Yet she hoped that a chance to make a *really* clean break with the Communist past and *really* dismantle the Soviet system—the abolition of the CPSU, she believed, had merely scratched the surface—could be a sufficient incentive.

Most of my contacts outside the circle of radical political activists thought it highly doubtful. One question that puzzled me was just how seriously one could take the political parties now dotting the Russian landscape. It is true, as one Moscow radical pointed out to me, that in a time of flux and upheaval, even numerically insignificant groups could have a strong impact on the political process. On the other hand, the public, as far as I could tell, sees most of these parties as diverting at best. On a morning radio show that discussed the forthcoming privatization drive in a humorous vein, the hostess quipped that those without the funds to be in the game had a number of options, such as "sitting at the kitchen table and cursing the government" and "joining a political party."

Yeltsin's prestige, though in decline, is still relatively high, although my marvelous driver Volodya, a cheerful, middle-aged man of the people, was beginning to sour on the Russian president: "I voted for him, and what has he done for me so far?" Part of Volodya's skepticism stemmed from a failed attempt (as recently as October, well after the alleged final collapse of Communism) to become a private farmer. The chairman of the *selsoviet*, or village council, would only let him lease a piece of land—with half of the produce to be turned over to the local government—until such time as the political situation stabilized. "What am I, crazy?" Volodya spat out. "If I am going to work the land, I want real rights as an owner, not hokey rights!" →

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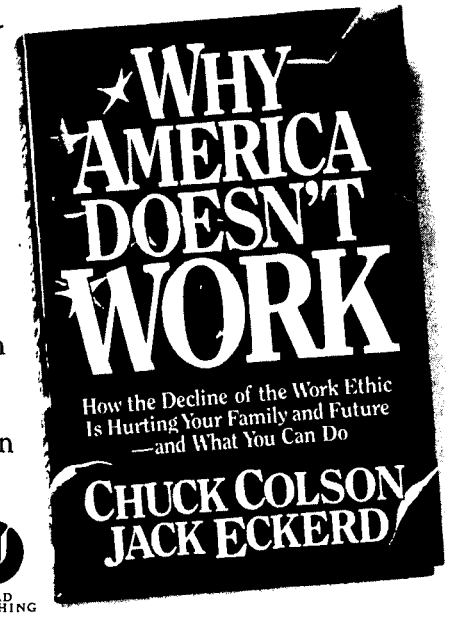
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For politics as such, this capitalist-minded man—who had no objection at all to some people getting very rich as long as he and his children could live in dignity—felt nothing but scorn. When I mentioned, as we drove across the Kuznetsky Bridge, that I had marched in a massive demonstration on that very route over a year ago, he chortled, "You know something—I *never* go to any of those demonstrations! The way I see it, it's just something for loafers who've got nothing better to do with themselves!" Even the memories of the August coup left him cold ("I don't really care what the guys in charge are called—democrats, or the junta, or whatever, as long as people can have a normal life and no one stops you from making a living!"). When I mentioned that George Bush had been criticized for not returning from Kennebunkport when news of the coup broke, he responded with unexpected excitement: "Hey, you know—I've got something in common with Bush! I was out in the country, too, and *I* didn't bother to come back!"

Other Muscovites still like to trade their coup stories at dinner parties or when talking to someone new ("We heard a rumble and my husband says, 'It must be the tanks coming.' I said, 'You're crazy! What tanks?' I ran out right in my housecoat and slippers, and there they were!"), and the sentimental recall weeping at the televised funeral of the three young men who were killed. I was shown the spot where they died in the nighttime skirmish with the troops, and given a souvenir to put next to my chunk of the Berlin Wall: a piece of broken glass from one of the trolley-buses used to build the barricades.

I also spoke to one real live Stalinist (the father, alas, of a former classmate of mine), who reminisced about Gorbachev's overthrow as he sat at a fairly opulent dinner table provided by his better-employed wife (who radiated a bouncy energy and wished the reforms had been launched twenty years earlier so she could have become a businesswoman). "I came to work and I started congratulating everyone," he said, "and they thought I was talking about some church holiday that was on the same day—and I said, No, no, they put an end to all this perestroika nonsense, that's *my* holiday!" Nowadays, though, even Stalinists are confused; one moment, the fellow was swearing eternal allegiance to "the ideal of socialism and Communism" and Comrade Stalin himself, and in the next breath affirming, with obvious admiration, that the Americans really knew how to make a society work—*and* how to make themselves respected. At the end of the evening, as he was seeing me off, he said, rather apologetically, "Look, if things are really going to get better, I've got nothing against that. I just wish they'd get better while I'm still alive."

Of that, there are few if any signs. On November 30, the anchor on the Television News Service concluded the late-night newscast by noting, "Tomorrow is December 1—the first day of what is sure to be a tough, cold, hungry winter." Even for those who decry this panic-mongering, it is difficult not to succumb to an apocalyptic mood. When I was interviewing political commentator and activist Leonid Batkin, a wise man of sharp, sardonic wit, the lights suddenly went out in his apartment and in half the building. Such things are normal enough in America, but in Moscow, though Batkin was unflappable, they immediately take on an ominous significance. Here, it is difficult not to translate a power outage into the beginning of the end. And in the kind of area where Batkin lived—the ugly housing projects with barely lit muddy streets that become the face of Moscow past a five-mile radius of the Kremlin, with the look of a desolate, middle-of-nowhere, post-nuclear landscape—apocalyptic thoughts suggest themselves with particular ease. (That, mind you, is the residence of a man of the stature of, say, a William Safire. Being in his sixties and having survived two heart attacks, he cannot walk to the metro. Unable to afford a cab, he is virtually housebound with his wife in a one-bedroom apartment unless someone with a car picks him up. To top it all off, he has to share a phone line with his next-door neighbors.)

The city that serves as a stage for this theater of the absurd bears traces of the hasty, patchy post-coup drive to rip away the symbols of its Communist past. Dzerzhinsky Square, the location of KGB headquarters—and of the sinister slab of black stone where the Dzerzhinsky monument towered until August—has regained its old name of Lubyanka, long a euphemism for the Soviet secret police; when train conductors announce, in their customary cheerful voice, "Next station, Lubyanka," the connotations are chilling.

Metro station Marx Avenue (*Prospekt Marksa*) has been changed to the avenue's old name, Hunters' Row (*Okhotny Ryad*); but aboveground, the avenue itself still bears the name of Marx, whose monument, too, is still in place. Lenin Avenue is there, and so is Komsomol Avenue, though there is no more Komsomol. According to one of my Russian friends, the reason the underground

(continued on page 52)

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Everything Old Is New Again

by James Bowman

This Christmas, according to the *New York Times*, nostalgia was in. Erector sets and Lincoln Logs, reproduction Western Flyer bicycles and Fleet Arrow sleds, Flintstones Cookie Jars and the Cleaver family refrigerator magnet all comforted those old enough to remember such things with the thought that neither they nor Santa Claus nor the solid world of the 1950s nor their childhoods had quite vanished from the face of the earth.

Naturally enough, the movies got into the act. *Star Trek* and *The Addams Family*, *Beauty and the Beast* and *Peter Pan*, *Father of the Bride* and *Cape Fear* all came back from the past in new and updated versions to make us feel similarly refreshed by the familiar. The question that the discriminating movie-goer wants answered, however, is whether these pictures have anything going for them except nostalgia.

Let's take them in order. It might occur to me to object to the preachiness of *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country* but for the fact that the preachiness is obviously part of the nostalgic appeal. Real Trekkies loved the original television series because it brought them some kind of vaguely liberal political message every week. Those who have come to love it since enjoy the campy way its moral predictability is set into the exotic technology of a future only imaginable at warp speed.

There are signs that the creators of the series of films based on the TV show have become aware of this expectation in their audience and play up to it with little touches of postmodern self-mockery, such as having a solemn Spock intone: "There is an old Vulcan proverb" (pause): "Only Nixon could go to China." Christopher Plummer, hamming it up as the evil Klingon general Chang, who quotes Shakespeare endlessly even while insisting that it is better in "the original Klingon," also tips us the knowing wink. Like Bones, the surgeon, we "would pay real money if he would just shut up."

I wonder how significant it is that the Shakespeare quotation in the film's subtitle is misapplied. In *Hamlet*, "the undiscovered country" is death; in *Star Trek* it is "the future." It is as if the film were making a deliberate attempt to render everything it touches as banal as its message. The message is that when an evil empire breaks up after seventy years of threatening the peace and oppressing its own people there are bound to be Cold Warriors on both sides who have an interest in keeping the level of tension high, lest they find themselves out of work and having to live amicably with people they don't trust.

That we must all learn to trust one another like the members of one big, happy family is the kind of infantile moral appropriate to television and is probably as much a part of the *Star Trek* saga as cutely humanoid aliens. For a brief period in the 1960s, TV's "The Addams Family" attempted to supply an antidote to this kind of bland sentimentalism by simply reversing it: everything nice was bad, everything bad was, if not nice, at least fun. The film picks up this frame of reference and gets a few good jokes out of it. "Unhappy, darling?" asks Gomez (Raul Julia); "Oh yes," replies Morticia (Anjelica Huston) with satisfaction, "completely."

But the nastiness is ultimately incoherent, both because she is obviously so happy being unhappy, and because it does not produce the consequences one normally associates with nastiness. It is only cute when Wednesday straps her brother Pugsley into a homemade electric chair and switches on the juice. In the next scene the victim is back, none the worse for his experience. This is just a kind of mirror image of sentimentalism in which the dark forces that lurk beneath the surface of happy family life are rendered as harmless as the little upsets that the Cleavers or the Andersons were able to put right in twenty-one minutes week after week.

It is the same kind of sanitizing and banalizing of potentially dangerous reality that I object to in the Walt Disney instant classic, *Beauty and the Beast*. Even if you discount the fact that I consider any feature-length animation project as being at best an accomplishment on the order of that of the Indian gentleman who has, I believe, transcribed the entire New Testament onto a grain of rice, this film is tripe. I know that it is supposed to be for the kiddies, but I cannot forbear to protest against it on behalf of mature taste—partly because it is selling an adult product.

Fairy tales are meant to be scary in the way that life is scary to children. Dark forests, grotesque ugliness, arbitrary rules with terrible punishments for breaking them, weak parents who can't protect you anymore—these are the essential ingredients of others besides *Beauty and the Beast*. It would take a child already on the verge of a nervous breakdown to be afraid of anything in this movie. Adults have sanitized it.

The cuddly beast looks like an American bison except that he defies evolutionary logic by having the teeth of a carnivore rather than a ruminant. In character, however, he is mostly bovine, and his rages are probably less terrifying than those of most kids' daddies. Certainly, Belle (as Beauty is called in this Frenchified version) shows no fear of him at all, presumably because it would compromise her as the true feminist heroine that adult sensibilities have made her. In fact, there is a whole invented subplot, too ridiculous for words, involving a male chauvinist hunter called Gaston, which is designed precisely to establish her feminist credentials.

It is true that she still marries the beast in the end and that he still turns into a handsome prince, but the thing is done in such a way as to make all but invisible the most terrifying thing about the story, which is the need to love blindly, to love before we can know that it is safe to love. In fact, one scene in which Belle goes poking around the beast's castle has no point un-

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less it is to suggest that a glimpse of recognition of the beast's eyes in a torn portrait of a man (could it be a prince?) has tipped her off that this isn't really a beast after all.

Outrageous! What's the use of him if he isn't a real beast, if he hasn't scared the woman out of her wits before she learns to love him? The real beast in this film is Gaston, the hairy-chested hunter fawned over by bosomy village cuties who contrast strikingly with the rather androgynous Belle. He spends his time slaughtering cuddly animals, expresses a low opinion of women's intellects, thinks education is wasted on them, is vain and arrogant and expects Belle to jump at the chance to marry him, and turns out, of course, to be a bully and a coward.

Only this beast is not one that anyone has to love; instead, we are meant to cheer when the only human male of marriageable age in the film gets offed by a manic-depressive in a buffalo suit. Meanwhile, a clock, a candlestick, and a teapot are singing and dancing away to beat the band. You've got to wonder what kind of values kids are going to take away from a picture like this. I guess the little girls, at least, will get something out of it if they learn to stick with the guy who owns the castle instead of the handsome ne'er-do-well who spends all his time in the woods, hunting.

Steven Spielberg's *Hook* is not quite as bad as this, but then it has less to spoil. I suppose it was inevitable that when they started reviving the old favorites, somebody would think to resurrect Barrie's lost boys and pirates and, above all, his precious Edwardian fairies. Predictably enough, this film is *Peter Pan* with some demented fairy in charge. The original was a flimsy enough vehicle; now that it is almost entirely given over to whimsy *and* freighted with Spielberg's heavy cargo of meaning and message, it can go nowhere.

The idea is that the boy who wouldn't grow up (Robin Williams) changed his mind when he saw the original Wendy's granddaughter and fell in love. So far so good. But then he came to America and turned into a workaholic mergers and acquisitions artist (haven't we seen this somewhere before?) who has no time for his own children until he is forced to return to Never-Never-Land to rescue them from the vicious Hook (Dustin Hoffman) and learn to be a child again himself.

Never-Never-Land turns out to be utterly predictable, morally speaking, since its silliness and magic are only so that Peter can be transformed and win back the affection of his son and so that Hook will be vanquished. At the same time, it is in its detail so absurdly unlike anything in the real world—right down to its three moons—that it might as well be a dream. The experience is potent to Peter, perhaps, but can hardly mean much to anyone else.

Reworking old material from sixties television shows or children's stories must be harder than remaking old movies, since the two remakes on offer this month are decidedly better than anything we've seen so far. *Father of the Bride*, with Steve Martin in the role played by Spencer Tracy in the 1950 Vincente Minnelli version, is like its prototype: funny and touching and light as a feather. You can understand how the *New Yorker* could slam the original for "complacency"—a vice its successor inherits in full measure—but for those who are not constantly indignant that there are, in advance of the millennium, both wealthy people and weddings, this is a fun picture, and Martin Short as the wedding consultant Frank (as in French currency rather than Sinatra) is a joy to watch.

But the Film of the Month is Martin Scorsese's *Cape Fear*, a remake to beat all remakes and one of the most thrilling thrillers since the great days of *film noir*. Scorsese is, as always, very much a director's director, someone who can be relied upon to do the filmic bits of film-making extremely well. *Cape Fear* is visually and dramatically exciting every step of the way and, if you are of a nervous disposition, will scare the pants off you.

The story is of an ex-convict called Max Cady (Robert DeNiro) who, having done time for sexual battery, holds a grudge against his former defense attorney (Nick Nolte) for having suppressed evidence about the sexual history of his victim that might have got him off. Having built up both his muscles and his brains in prison, he determines to seek revenge against not only Nolte but his wife (Jessica Lange) and daughter (Juliette Lewis) in such a way that they will be half-dead with fear of him before he lays a hand on them.

It was inspired of Scorsese to make the Nolte *ménage* what is nowadays called a "dysfunctional family" instead of the Ozzie and Harriet goodie-goodies of the 1962 version. Undercutting the in-built nostalgia like that adds enormously to the terror. Likewise, introducing the idea of Nolte's guilty secret was a way of humanizing him at the same time that it made for moral ambiguity: he suppressed the evidence because he knew that Cady was guilty and a menace to society.

As with Scorsese's last film, *Goodfellas*, however, you get the feeling that he doesn't quite know what to do with the materials he has so brilliantly assembled. The most impressive scene in *Cape Fear* comes when DeNiro nearly seduces Nolte's 15-year-old daughter, coming close and putting his hand in what to the audience is a fearfully menacing way to her face. She transforms it into something both tender and exciting by kissing his thumb, and the two exchange a passionate kiss. Then, in the next scene, there is a visual echo as Nolte puts his hand to her face to shake her for having been so stupid as to meet Cady alone. The murderous outsider's amorous gesture is naturally contrasted with the loving father's violent one.

Yet it all leads to nothing. The family is brought back together, after a fashion, by resistance to the Cadian terror and presumably live happily ever after. The lawyer's failure to represent his client to the best advantage, like the girl's sexual awakening and disgust with her parents' constant squabbling, are issues that are raised in terribly interesting ways but then left unresolved. Presumably they are too disturbing to the tender sensibilities of an audience that pays good money to be scared by physical terror. ❐

HARD TIMES

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transit system was so far ahead of the street-level city was that the metro administration had supported the coup in August and was overanxious to demonstrate its anti-Communist zeal afterwards. (Of course, renaming streets would mean changing many more signs.) However, the name of THE V. I. LENIN MOSCOW METRO TRANSIT SYSTEM still graces the metro maps posted in the stations and on the trains.

Around the city, many buildings still sport plaques marking the residences of various Communist heroes. And one occasionally sees (though I'm sure most Muscovites never *see* them) tawdry, drab murals urging the education of Soviet youth in a Communist spirit or proclaiming WE ARE BUILDING COMMUNISM. On the morning of December 9, as Volodya took me to Sheremetyevo airport, we drove past a brass stella with the state seal of the Soviet Union and the words, SSSR—OPLOT MIRA, which, given the double meaning of *mir*, could be read as THE USSR IS THE BULWARK OF PEACE or THE USSR IS THE MAINSTAY OF THE WORLD. The brass looked dull and grimy.

A couple of hours later on the plane, I opened the *International Herald Tribune* and read about the Minsk accord, the official death certificate of the USSR. I realized I had been among the last to see it alive. ❐

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HENRY CLAY: STATESMAN FOR THE UNION

Robert V. Remini

W. W. Norton/818 pages/$35

reviewed by PAUL JOHNSON

Since the end of the 1820s, the presidency of the United States has been the greatest popularly elected office in the world, the most precious of the glittering prizes open to a professional politician. For some, White House hunger has been a huge, insatiable, enduring appetite, which neither time nor failure could appease. One thinks of William Jennings Bryan, of Robert A. Taft, of Hubert Humphrey, men who longed for the office with all their soul and sought it year after year, sometimes decade after decade, in vain. Of these, the greatest by far was Henry Clay of Kentucky. He achieved everything else he wanted, serving as speaker of the House, leader of the Senate, and secretary of state, and acquiring demotic titles galore, among them "Star of the West," "Prince Hal," and "The Great Compromiser." But the office of chief executive eluded him.

He first felt the presidential itch strongly in 1816, when he was 39. Expecting to be President Monroe's secretary of state and thus (as was usual then) his heir apparent, he was instead offered the secretaryship of war, which he turned down in disgust. He ran for President in 1824, and came in fourth. He ran again in 1832, and failed miserably. He campaigned a third time in 1840, when he would almost certainly have won, but was cheated out of the Whig nomination. He got it in 1844, but was beaten by a whisker. He still hankered to run in 1848, when he was over 70, and at the least encouragement would have done so. Only his death in 1852 killed the ravening desire in his heart.

Robert Remini, whose three-volume life of Andrew Jackson is one of the monuments of modern American biography, has now completed his panorama of the age by writing the life of Jackson's greatest opponent. He shows Clay for what he was: opportunist and man of principle, statesman and scoundrel, hedonist and man of sorrows, hot-tempered, abusive, warm-hearted, forgiving, hateful and lovable, a politician of extraordinary contrasts and superlative abilities. It makes a fascinating and cautionary tale.

Paul Johnson's Modern Times *has just been published in a revised, updated edition by HarperCollins.*

Men skilled at political manipulation rarely know how to make good use of the power they obtain through it. Clay, however, combined a genius for politics with imagination and creativity. His ability to work the system was not matched until the coming of Lyndon B. Johnson; his record as an innovator will never be equaled. Clay came from the Slashes, the low-lying marshlands of Virginia, and as a lad he learned his oratory at the Hanover Court House, made famous by Patrick Henry. Clay was the orphan son of a Baptist preacher and tobacco farmer, and once in politics quickly learned to make the most of his early hard times—he actually invented the phrase "self-made man." In fact, in some ways he was lucky. In Richmond he was office boy to the great chancellor George Wythe, who had taught Jefferson, Monroe, and Chief Justice Marshall. Wythe liked the clever lad and not only made him learned in the law but also taught him the manners of a gentleman and introduced him into society, where he was quickly at home, especially with the ladies.

In 1797, at age 20, Clay moved west to Kentucky, a former colony of Virginia that had become a state five years before. For an ambitious young man it was the ideal time to arrive, with all avenues open; and Clay consolidated his chances by marrying into the Kentucky establishment. Within a few years he was the leading member of the state legislature, the highest paid criminal lawyer in Kentucky, a director of its main bank, professor of law and politics at Transylvania University, and the owner of a handsome property, Ashland, which would be his home and solace for the rest of his life. He even served two brief terms in the U.S. Senate, but it was not until he was elected to the House in August 1810 that his national career began. He was already deeply versed in the skullduggery of the politics of Kentucky, "that dark and bloody ground," and used to playing it rough with its leading inhabitants, described by one contemporary as "blue beards, rugged, dirty, brawling, browbeating monsters, six feet high, whose vocation is robbing, drinking, fighting and terrifying every peaceable man in the community." Clay was six feet high himself, and could swear, drink, and fight with the best of them. But he could also put on, when required, his Richmond manners and soon showed himself a master of conciliation. A year after entering the House, he was elected its speaker.

This led to the first of his political innovations. The House had until that time followed the English tradition, whereby the speaker presided impartially and represented the collective viewpoint. Clay transformed this essentially non-political post into one of leadership, drilling and controlling a partisan majority and, in the process, making himself the most powerful man in the country after the President. In the first instance he led the anti-British War Hawks, and was the man most responsible—much more so than the indecisive Madison, or even his secretary of state, Monroe—for taking America into the War of 1812. Nonetheless, Clay escaped blame for the many disasters of that avoidable conflict, and was a natural choice for the U.S. team that negotiated the peace treaty at Ghent. Although it merely restored the *status quo ante bellum*, the treaty was such a relief to burned and bankrupt Washington that Clay returned in triumph. It was this success that gave him the notion that he ought to be secretary of state to the new President, Monroe. When John Quincy Adams was picked instead, Clay used his enormous power in the House to form a systematic opposition to the Monroe administration. Here, too, he was an innovator.

Was he unprincipled? Yes and no. Like many politicians, Clay tended to confuse his personal advancement with the national interest. But, as Remini shows, once Clay found his feet in Washington he developed a body of public doctrine that, whatever his original motives in adopting it, became increasingly coherent and consistent. He believed that the liberty and sovereign inde-

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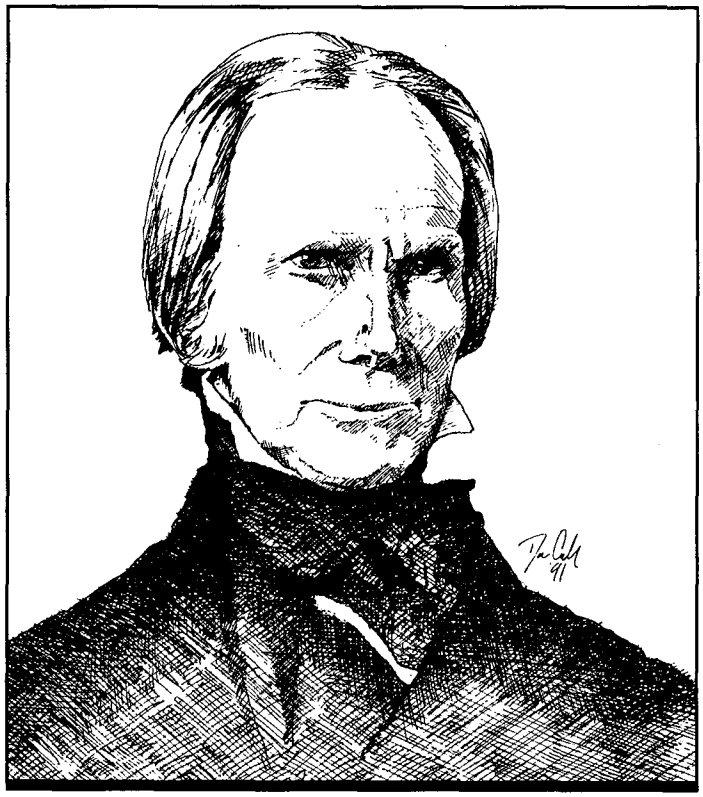
pendence of the hemisphere should be the prime object of U.S. foreign policy. He thought the administration tardy in recognizing the independence of the Latin republics created by Bolívar's revolution and argued the case that eventually found expression in the Monroe Doctrine. He thought, likewise, that the United States should secure its economic independence from Europe by creating its own manufacturing sector. For this reason, he enacted in 1816 the first American protective tariff and pressed for what he termed the "American System," under which state and federal governments would build roads, canals, and harbors to hasten industrialization, speed westward expansion, and bind the union together.

There was, to be sure, a large element of self-interest. Clay's estate grew hemp, a Kentucky staple, and needed both protection from European hemp imports and good roads to take it east. He argued the case for a second Bank of the United States, as the custodian of a sound currency and the promoter of well-financed enterprise; it just so happened he was paid the huge retainer of $6,000 a year to fight the Bank's cases in Kentucky, and borrowed from it when necessary—indeed, he was also loaned large sums by J. J. Astor, another beneficiary of the "American System." But Clay plainly believed with every fiber of his being that America could and must become a leading industrial power, and that such expansion would eventually make it the greatest nation on earth. Just as John Marshall laid down the legal basis of U.S. capitalism, so did Clay supply its political foundations.

Again, though his colleagues in the House, and later in the Senate, saw him as dictatorial and sometimes resented the way he used his authority to advance his views or ambitions, they respected his patriotism and saw the advantages of the strong leadership he provided. When he was in charge, the House functioned efficiently and fairly. Whenever he chose to stand, he was always voted into the speakership by large majorities; later, in the Senate, the bulk of his fellows always looked to him to take the lead. He was extraordinarily fertile in resolving deadlocks, reconciling opponents, drafting compromises, getting what was in many ways a flawed system of government to work. He knew more about its nuts and bolts than any of his predecessors. Moreover, he had charm. Men who hated him by repute were overwhelmed when they met him face to face. A friend said to Thomas Glascock of Georgia: "General, may I introduce you to Henry Clay?" "No, Sir, I am his adversary and choose not to subject myself to his fascination." His mortal opponent John C. Calhoun, protagonist in oratorical duels of the most brutal savagery, admitted through clenched teeth: "I don't like Clay. He is a bad man, an imposter, a creator of wicked schemes. I wouldn't speak to him but, by God, I love him!" Clay delighted wives and daughters even more. On barge, riverboat, and stagecoach, above all in Washington drawing rooms, he always sought out the ladies, abounding in jokes and small talk. He was a great kisser. As he put it, "Kissing is like the presidency, it is not to be sought and not to be *declined*." His opponents complained that his prodigiously wide mouth gave him an unfair advantage: "The ample dimensions of his kissing apparatus enabled him completely to *rest* one side of it while the other was on active duty." If women had had the vote, Clay would have found no difficulty in becoming President.



However, one tall, emaciated, bullet-scarred, pain-racked figure remained totally impervious to the Clay charisma. Gen. Andrew Jackson became increasingly the dominant figure in American politics in the 1820s, and remained so throughout the 1830s, even after he left the White House in 1837. His unremitting hostility was fatal to Clay's presidential chances. Clay was a great congressional orator, one of the few in American history whose technique served equally well in the House and the Senate; but his style was essentially that of an advocate. Like his great contemporary Daniel O'Connell, "Liberator" of Ireland and another lawyer-politician, he worked up his indignation, pathos, wit, solemnity, and vituperation as the occasion demanded. There was no real animosity in his personal abuse and, once the speech was over, he would hold out the hand of friendship to his targets, pour forth words of generous apology if need be, and expect to be forgiven. And most did forgive. But Jackson, one of the outstanding haters in American history, was not like that. While capable of dissimulating when politically convenient, he never allowed his inner rages to abate and he pursued his enemies with unrelenting ferocity. When Clay, as part of his vengeful campaign against the Monroe administration, attacked its leniency toward Jackson's outrageous conduct in Florida—in the process accusing him of behaving like a would-be Napoleon—the General took it as a declaration of war. In fact, both men, as westerners, agreed on much, although they were on opposite sides on the Bank issue; in other circumstances Clay might well have endorsed the Florida annexation. He had nothing against Jackson the man. As it was, he turned him into a mortal foe. To Jackson, Clay became, and remained for thirty years, "the *Judas* of the West," the "profligate demagogue," "the basest, meanest scoundrel that ever disgraced the image of his God." On his deathbed Jackson is alleged to have said that one of his two greatest regrets in life was that "I didn't shoot Henry Clay."

After some ineffectual attempts to heal the breach, Clay returned the abuse with interest. Unfortunately for Clay, Jackson was in a position to do far more damage. The critical moment came in the 1824 election, when Jackson and Clay were among four candidates, none of whom secured a majority. That sent the election to the House, where the voting was by states. With the largest number of both popular and elec-

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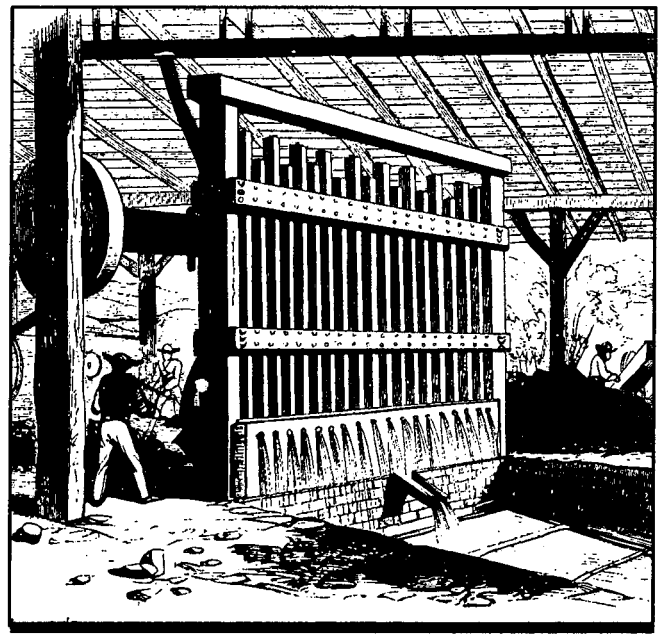
toral votes, Jackson was the moral victor. But Clay, as speaker, indeed as virtual dictator of the House, was in a position to determine the result. Had he come in third, he undoubtedly would have arranged the presidency for himself. But he had been outmaneuvered in New York, a notorious nest of electoral fraud, and finished fourth. He was still, however, the arbiter, and chose to back John Quincy Adams, the runner-up. His choice was not entirely self-seeking. He dismissed Jackson on the grounds that "I cannot believe that killing 2,500 Englishmen at New Orleans qualifies for the various, difficult, and complicated duties of the Chief Magistry." Adams, by contrast, was well qualified and, coming from the Northeast, fitted in with Clay's "American System." But long before the House met to make its choice on February 9, 1825, rumors spread that Clay proposed to make Adams President in return for being appointed secretary of state. The two men were closeted alone for three hours on the evening of Sunday, January 9. As Remini says, Adams certainly made deals to get the support of Missouri, Maryland, and possibly other states, though he discounts a specific exchange of votes for office. But it is odd that Adams's normally copious diary comes to an abrupt end in the middle of the key meeting, as if the upright and self-righteous Adams simply could not bring himself to record what they had agreed upon. In any event, once Clay made Adams President and was duly appointed secretary of state, the Jackson camp, led by the General himself, sent up an outcry about what they termed a "Corrupt Bargain."



The episode was a watershed, for the 1828 election campaign began almost immediately, with the formation of the new Democratic party around Jackson. The party's appeal was consciously demotic and broadened by a network of newspapers operated by the new steam presses. These were set up by the Jackson entourage, among whom experts in the embryo science of public relations were prominent. The Democrats, imitating Clay's tactics against Monroe, began systematic opposition and, after they captured Congress in 1826, effectively destroyed the Adams administration, frustrating in the process all of Clay's imaginative ventures in foreign and trading policy. Two years later the first "modern" presidential election, distinguished by gimmickry and buffoonery, gave Jackson the White House by a decisive margin. The abuse was barbarous: those who called the Bush campaign's tricks in 1988 "dirty" and "unprecedented" clearly do not know their history. Clay was by no means hesitant in going after the General on Adams's behalf. The leading Clay editor, Charles Hammond of the *Cincinnati Gazette*, dwelt lovingly on the rumor that Jackson had never been lawfully married to his wife, asking: "Ought a convicted adulteress and her paramour husband to be placed in the highest offices of this free and Christian land?" Clay may not have had a hand in the notorious "Coffin Handbill," accusing Jackson of numerous killings by duels and unlawful executions, but he made no effort to stop the *Gazette* from spreading such smears as "General Jackson's mother was a *Common Prostitute* brought to this country by the British soldiers! She afterwards married a *Mulatto Man*, by whom she had several children, of which *General Jackson is one!!!*" Jackson particularly resented the allegations against his wife: she died at the end of the campaign and he held Clay responsible. As he put it, "Even the aged and virtuous female is not free from his secrete [sic] combinations of base slander."

Jackson's newspapers, more numerous and on the whole more proficient, hit at least as hard, and in the "Corrupt Bargain" they had a masterful theme. To politicians under attack, Disraeli would later advise: "Never complain and never explain." Clay did both, foolishly producing constant and often inconsistent defenses of his conduct in getting Adams into the White House. They convinced few, and their effect was to keep the issue alive and to play straight into the hands of the Jacksonians. There were other charges against Clay, monotonously repeated for the rest of his political life, all the more damaging because they were often true. Like Jackson he had fought duels, and was held responsible for others, without the excuse of being a military man. He was an inveterate gambler at whist and poker, as he admitted. "I have always paid peculiar homage to the fickle goddess." He sometimes played for high stakes—on one occasion, Remini records, he wagered a hotel he owned—and ran into debt (his admirers eventually banded together and raised over $25,000 to get him out of trouble). He drank, often heavily and all through the night, and could become abusive in his cups. His wife Lucretia, a much-suffering sourpuss who disliked Washington, rarely accompanied him there and, Remini says, never once wrote him a letter. Left to his own devices, he womanized, though Remini does not produce specific instances.

The truth is that Clay was by nature convivial to the point of recklessness, in an age when decorum was rapidly becoming a prerequisite for public officials. Like other passionate patriots of the hemisphere—Simon Bolívar is an outstanding example—he loved to dance. He played the fiddle, even on the hustings, which was fine in Kentucky but less acceptable further east. He joined uproariously in any cavorting going on. An eyewitness quoted by Remini describes Clay in "a grand Terpsichorean performance . . . executing a *pas seul* from head to foot of the dining table, sixty feet in length . . . to the crashing accompaniment of shivered glass and china"—the next morning he was presented with a bill for $120, which he paid "with a flourish." Such tales were widely told and grew in the telling. They mattered little in 1824, still an uproarious age, but more and more in the 1830s and 1840s, as what we now call Victorian morality strengthened its grip on society.

Clay had other political handicaps, relentlessly stressed by his many enemies. Until late in life he belonged to no church, a position he (again foolishly) tried to explain. He was a Mason. So, of course, had been Washington and Jefferson, Madison and Monroe—so, for that matter, were Jackson and Polk—but by the 1830s there existed an anti-Masonic party, founded in New York but rapidly spreading west, and the charge was made to weigh heavily against Clay. More serious still was Clay's

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ambivalent position on slavery. He was brought up in a slave-owning society, and as a boy he inherited two slaves from his father and one from his grandfather. He owned slaves virtually all his life, usually about twenty. But he detested slavery and regarded it as a great moral evil. As a boy he had helped a runaway slave to escape. He evidently treated his own slaves well: his black valet, enticed to New York by abolitionists with a $500 bribe, insisted on paying it back and returned to his master. Clay tried repeatedly to get Kentucky to change its constitution and ban slavery. But, as long as it was lawful, he felt he could not run his estate competitively without slave labor. The alternative was to move north, as did the Virginian Edward Coles, who became the second governor of Illinois. Instead, Clay adopted the attitude of the old Virginian moderates, which went back to the 1690s, and advocated the freeing of slaves and their repatriation to Africa. He joined the American Society for Colonizing the Free People of Color of the United States, founded in 1816, and in 1836 became its president. His attitude toward the problem put him in a good position to mediate between North and South, but it hurt him as a presidential candidate; to northern abolitionists he was a slaveowner, to Southerners a traitor.

Clay was elected to the Senate in November 1831 and immediately became one of its stars: with Calhoun and Daniel Webster he formed "the great triumvirate" who made the 1830s and 1840s what is often termed the golden age of Senate oratory. He continued to innovate. He created, summoned, and was nominated by the earliest national convention, which met in Washington in December 1831. He was the first to realize that Jackson was transforming his office, and waged a vigorous campaign against what he called "the imperial presidency." As the leading senator, he systematically got Jackson's appointments voted down, and persuaded his colleagues to pass a motion of censure on the President in March 1834. The next month he used the term "the patriotic Whigs" to invent the Whig party. The idea was to oppose "King Andrew" as the English Whigs had once opposed George III. The term Whig stuck, for a decade or so. But Clay's hopes of branding Jackson, and his successors Van Buren and Polk, as "Tories" failed: with their strident populism, their belief that all offices, including judges of the Supreme Court, should be elected by virtually universal male suffrage, they were so tremendously and obviously un-Tory as to make the analogy ridiculous.

The Whig party was thus fundamentally flawed. With Clay as its unofficial leader, it could win the businessmen in the northeast and the growing Midwest. Indeed, in a sense Clay laid the foundations of the future Republican party, not only in its economic aims but in its moderate approach to slavery: Lincoln, in his debates with Stephen A. Douglas, was to quote Clay's arguments no less than forty-one times. But for immigrants pouring in from Europe, whom the new political machines could get into the registers within three months, the Whigs had little appeal. The party won the Senate in 1842, the House in 1846, and the presidency in 1848. Its one big victory, when it carried all three, was in 1840, in the aftermath of the 1837 panic. And on that occasion, Clay was swindled out of the nomination by manipulation of the convention system he had himself invented.

The 1840 Whig convention introduced a new concept to American politics: that of unelectability. It explains the thumbs-down given Clay by the party bosses of New York and Pennsylvania, the two key states. Thurlow Weed, the New York City boss, said he preferred Clay to any other candidate, but added that Clay was seen as an abolitionist in the South, a slaveholder in the North, and a Mason in both—there was no way he could win. Clay's old Boston friend, Senator Otis, put it another way: General Harrison, who was nominated instead, was by no means "brilliant," but he "possesses above all that essential requisite . . . the favor and good will of the mass of the people, in other words *popularity*." Clay, so skilled and successful at operating the old elitist system, wined and dined by the entrepreneurial classes wherever he went, had to accept the bitter truth that, in a dawning era of democracy, he had insufficient mass appeal. This was demonstrated in 1844 when he failed to attract enough immigrant votes to carry New York and Pennsylvania, and lost the South by refusing to back the annexation of Texas, inexplicably in view of his general support for westward expansion. The real reason he was against it, I suspect, was that his old enemy, Jackson, then almost on his deathbed but still thirsting for Clay's blood, was so passionately for it. At all events, he lost to Polk by the narrow plurarity of 1.4 percent.

In a sense, he was too good for the job, and had to endure seeing lesser men hold it. Exasperated by his lack of tact, they did not even defer to his judgment. Harrison more or less told him that his unsolicited advice was not welcome. "Mr. Clay, you forget that I am President." Har-

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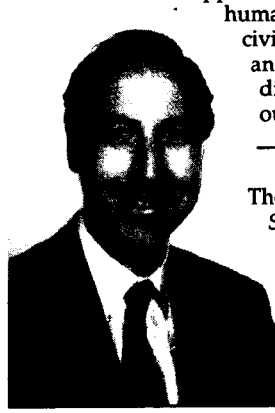

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risson's successor, Tyler, lost his temper and told him, "Go you now, then, Mr. Clay, retire to your end of the avenue, where stands the Capitol, and there perform your duty as you shall think proper. So help me God, I shall do mine at this end of it as *I* shall think proper."

These snubs and exclusions deepened the shadows as Clay grew older. He had much else to endure. His family life was a series of hammer blows. Of his eleven children, two daughters died in infancy, a third aged 12, a fourth at 14, a fifth at 20; his remaining daughter Anne—his favorite child—was killed by a post-natal infection, leaving the Clays with seven small children to bring up. His eldest son spent most of his life in an insane asylum, his second became an alcoholic, his third—the most promising—was bayoneted to death in the Mexican War, and the youngest joined the eldest in confinement. Clay suffered these Job-like sorrows with agonized fortitude: one cannot but think that his intense political involvement, maintained until old age, was in some way an escape from his stricken home.

Opinionated, partisan, and impetuous throughout his life, Clay was nonetheless pragmatic when it came to getting things done, presiding over both House and Senate, when the national interest demanded, in an ecumenical spirit: his three principal achievements were all irenic. In 1819-20, he was the architect of the two-part deal known to history as the Missouri Compromise, which settled, or at any rate dampened, the slavery issue for a generation. In 1833—despite his strong personal views—he devised the compromise tariff that almost certainly prevented the development of American political parties on sectional lines. And finally, brushing aside all his disappointments and setbacks, and employing all the matchless resources of his persuasive oratory, he pushed through the Compromise of 1850, which again defused the conflict between North and South. Senator Foote, who took part in this historic debate, perhaps the most remarkable ever staged in the Capitol, later argued that, if Clay had sat in the 1860-61 Congress, there would have been no Civil War. I doubt it. But it is clear that, with a gigantic piece of democratic machinery like the U.S. federal system operating according to a written but often ambiguous Constitution, the kind of lubricating skills Clay possessed in such plenitude are well-nigh indispensable. They have never been more requisite now, and that gives the story of his career, so well told by Professor Remini, relevance and importance. ❐

OUT OF THE BARRIO: TOWARD A NEW POLITICS OF HISPANIC ASSIMILATION

Linda Chavez

Basic Books/208 pages/$23

reviewed by WILLIAM McGURN

One Saturday morning a few years ago, Newt Gingrich and GOPAC launched a live TV link-up with community leaders across the country, in hopes of bringing the Reagan Revolution to the local level. I attended the link-up session sponsored by the Organization of Chinese Americans at the Holiday Inn in Silver Spring, Maryland. Immediately after the TV segment, a public liaison officer from Mayor Barry's office rose and proceeded to thump for the same old Great Society solutions that had just been repudiated on screen. (The Republican party didn't even bother to send a representative to the meeting, but that's another story.)

To my astonishment, a number of Chinese Americans in the audience—educated, obviously affluent, more or less conservative—agreed. Lamenting their lack of power and influence, they compared themselves unfavorably to American blacks. "Who listens to us?" asked one well-dressed man in a dark business suit. "Nobody. We have to be more like them [blacks]."

The attitude puzzled me. Surely Asians would find the social and economic price paid by blacks for their political clout too steep. Yet the question demonstrates that despite its many ethnic minorities America has only one language of civil rights, and it is a language of failure. In *Out of the Barrio*, Linda Chavez, executive director of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights under Ronald Reagan, illustrates the devastating effects the black model is having on Hispanics trying to become part of mainstream society. "Previous immigrants had been eager to become 'American,' to learn the language, to fit in," writes Chavez. "But the entitlements of the civil rights era encouraged Hispanics to maintain their language and culture, their separate identity, in return for the rewards of being members of an officially recognized minority group."

William McGurn is the Washington bureau chief of National Review.

Out of the Barrio, then, is really two books in one. The first is about the American dream (the operative word in the book's subtitle is *assimilation*). The second relates the Hispanic experience to U.S. immigration policy, implying that the rejection of an American identity by Hispanic groups such as the Mexican American Legal and Defense Education Fund and the National Council of La Raza only increases public enthusiasm for more guard dogs and barbed wire along our southern border. "To succeed at the affirmative action game," says Chavez, "Hispanics had to establish their failure in other areas."

Chavez ranges far and wide in this short book, but it's held together by the assumption that assimilation is the *sine qua non* of any multi-ethnic democracy. In the past, she notes, this proposition was accepted by immigrants and native-born alike, to the enrichment of both. Even the fact of past discrimination merely confirms Chavez's larger point: that Hispanics have not had it any tougher than other immigrants. And the discrimination felt by Hispanics was never comparable to that experienced by American blacks. While the U.S. did not get its first elected black governor until Doug Wilder, there have been six Hispanic governors since the turn of the century. Moreover, at the time the Voting Rights Act was passed, two Mexican-Americans from Texas (where hostility toward them was highest) held seats in Congress, a situation unthinkable for blacks in the Deep South.

Her position established, Chavez directs her first shot at bilingual education. Originally a temporary program to bring youngsters up to speed while they learned English, bilingual education has become a government-subsidized mandate for Hispanic separatism, and has provoked an understandable backlash. Other minorities have felt its sting, particularly during hard times, but the emphasis on Spanish arouses

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special resentment because it bespeaks a desire for separatism and an unwillingness to abide by the old rules. As Chavez points out, "Nothing so stirs animosity toward Hispanics as the belief that they do not wish to learn English." (Except perhaps the idea that taxpayer dollars should go to reinforcing this disinclination.)

Even those of us who, like Chavez, view immigration as critical to America's continued prosperity wonder about the wisdom of letting in people who become eligible for all manner of costly entitlements while being absolved of any responsibility. Not all of those who are part of the anti-immigration backlash, she notes, are cranks:

> Many are simply frustrated at what they see as an erosion in the consensus that the United States has a common language and culture worth preserving. They see Hispanic youngsters taught in their native language, ballots printed in Spanish, and licensing exams for everything from becoming a barber to driving a car administered in Spanish. They see election districts gerrymandered to give Hispanics extra political clout, illegal aliens used to apportion legislative seats, and even demands by some Hispanic leaders that noncitizens be allowed to vote in U.S. elections. They see Hispanics given preference in hiring, promotions, and admissions to universities. At some point non-Hispanics were bound to try to do something about it. The outrage has been manifest in laws to make English the official language and in attempts to restrict Hispanic immigration. Neither of these efforts, however, has addressed head-on the issue of Hispanic entitlements. Moreover, both have polarized the Hispanic community, driving many moderate Hispanics into a more radical, separatist camp.

In fact, closer examination would show it is not maintaining Spanish per se that arouses hostility (last time I checked there were no movements against Greek-language religious services, Yeshivas, or even Chinatowns). It's the elevation of a foreign tongue to parity with English through government chicanery and at the expense of the hapless taxpayer.

Like so much other mischief, bilingual education began in the 1970s with an innocuous-sounding directive from the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare ordering school districts with more than a 5 percent minority population to take "affirmative steps" to help children who didn't speak English. One Supreme Court decision (involving, oddly enough, a Chinese named Kenny Lau) and several administrative interpretations later, the deed was done. Schools either had to "initiate bilingual programs, whose effectiveness did not have to be demonstrated, or accept the burden of proving the superior effectiveness of alternative programs." Note the underhanded procedure: bilingual education was never explicitly ordered; it was eased in the back door by regulations that made alternatives too difficult, expensive, or vulnerable to lawsuit, just the sort of legerdemain that lends credence to conservative suspicions about the recently signed civil rights bill.

Likewise significant is that the champions of bilingual education have never had to demonstrate the efficacy of their own agenda, because such a requirement would soon put them out of business. A number of studies over the past fifteen years have shown federally funded bilingual education to be a complete flop both in boosting proficiency in English (hard to do when students are speaking Spanish all day) and in improving performance in other subjects. Nor have advocates had to demonstrate support from the people they ostensibly represent. Good thing, too, for there's no evidence bilingual education is popular with Hispanics; an Education Department survey found that a whopping majority (78 percent of Mexican-Americans, 82 percent of Cuban-Americans) opposed teaching in Spanish if it meant less time for English.

Of course, the gulf between the Hispanic community and its leadership makes perfect sense when you recognize their opposing interests. Parents want their children to get ahead, to do better than they did, which in America means a better education, increased career options, a mortgage—Main Street, USA. Hispanic leaders, most of them funded by the large foundations (Ford in particular), are largely unaccountable to the Hispanic community. They are more properly considered "ethnic power brokers" whose main base lies *outside* the community.

Consequently, instead of celebrating the patriotism and success of Hispanics who have already made it in the U.S., Hispanic leaders might as well be writing Pat Buchanan's speeches. They manipulate the growing percentage of Hispanic immigrants to downplay the material progress of the community as a whole, then use this disparity to barter for ever more privileges, set-asides, and quotas. The upshot, says Chavez, is that if the average Joe knows anything about Hispanics, it's that they have been left behind by the rest of American society:

> The Hispanic poor, who constitute only about one-fourth of the Hispanic population, are visible to all. These are the Hispanics most likely to be studied, analyzed, and reported on and certainly the ones most likely to be read about. A recent computer search of stories about Hispanics in major newspapers and magazines over a 12-month period turned up more than eighteen hundred stories in which the word *Hispanic* or *Latino* occurred within a hundred words of the word poverty. In most people's minds, the expression poor Hispanic is almost redundant.

Confirming the stereotype, the president of La Raza thunders that U.S. racism has left Hispanics "the poorest of the poor, the most segregated minority in schools, the lowest-paid group in America and the least educated minority in this nation."

The basis for all this hokum usually is some kind of apples-and-oranges comparison of median income that shows Hispanics still earning a fraction of what whites earn. Mexican-Americans, for instance, earn about 57 percent of the white average, a proportion that has held firm for roughly three decades now. From this we are supposed to infer that Mexican-Americans have not improved their lot over time. What they don't tell you is that they are not talking about the same people. In 1960, more than 85 percent of Mexican-Americans had been born in the U.S. Today, only half of Hispanic adults are U.S.-born. Given that immigrants by and large start out at the bottom of the ladder, the larger the immigrant base of any community the greater the drag on the average. Economic breakdowns rarely factor in time spent in the U.S. (the government, Chavez notes, does not distinguish between the incomes of native-born and immigrants); when these factors are taken into account, virtually all discrepancies disappear. "The most invisible Hispanics today are those who have been absorbed into the mainstream," the author writes. "The success of middle-class Hispanics is an untold—and misunderstood—story, perhaps least appreciated by Hispanic advocates whose interest is in promoting the view that Latinos can't make it in this society."

The engine behind these distortions, of course, is affirmative action. Back when the civil and voting rights acts were first passed in the 1960s, the enemy was discrimination and the goal opportunity. But with affirmative action all that was thrown out the window: far from equal opportunity, the standards were shifted for certain people. In turn, whole new classes of

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beneficiaries were created. Chavez pointedly informs us, for example, that the term *Hispanic* did not exist before affirmative action and does not exist outside America: how else would you lump an Argentine doctor, a Mexican housewife, and a Cakchiquel Indian into the same culture? And the leadership ignores the more compelling lessons to be learned from the distinctly different paths taken by, say, Cubans and Puerto Ricans, lessons that primarily confirm the primacy of marriage and family and warn against looking to government for solutions.

This is not to deny that there have been beneficiaries of affirmative action, only to say that they have largely been confined to an elite funded by outside sources and politicians enjoying seats safe from challenge. Political scientist Peter Skerry, author of a forthcoming book on Hispanic politics, notes that the use of illegal aliens to inflate population figures used for redistricting is creating "rotten boroughs" where politicians are elected by very few voters. The upshot, as Chavez notes, is a class of leaders "more intent on vying with blacks for permanent victim status" than on helping Hispanics become the latest chapter of the American dream. The David Dukes are already reaping the harvest. ❐

MOSTLY MORGENTHAUS: A FAMILY HISTORY

Henry Morgenthau III

Ticknor & Fields/501 pages/$27.50

reviewed by EDWARD NORDEN

Getting rich and founding a dynasty in America is no problem. The hard part is keeping the dynasty going. It's especially hard to preserve a great Jewish family, because in the U.S. the Jews chronically melt away.

Three generations, a century at most, after a Jew arrives on these shores, most of his descendants have been assimilated. Of the Sephardi Jews who upset Peter Stuyvesant by settling in New Amsterdam, there's hardly a living trace. The German Jews who came over between 1840 and 1870—"Our Crowd"—have kept their family names but not the ancestral faith. Today the vanishing is being done by the great-grandchildren of the huddled eastern European masses immortalized by Emma Lazarus, herself of Sephardi extraction. The fast track to assimilation, to disappearance, has always been intermarriage, and current figures tell us that American Jews are choosing to marry out more frequently than in and raising their kids mainly as Christians or as nothing. Exceptions like the author of this book furnish the nicest proof of the rule.

Henry Morgenthau the Third's great-grandfather Lazarus stepped off the boat with his wife and dozen offspring in 1866. This was late for someone who aimed to join Our Crowd, that interlocking in-group of families like the Seligmanns and Lehmans, Loebs and Wertheims, Goldmans and Sachses, whose founders had crossed the ocean and made their first piles before the guns went off at Fort Sumter. A climber, a bit of a scoundrel with an indifferent business sense and a violent streak, Lazarus failed in his bid to conjure a New World fortune and win the seal of approval for his clan. However, one of his German-born sons, Henry Senior, burnished the Morgenthau name with a chain of real estate killings—he sold Times Square to Adolph Ochs—so that by the time his native-born children married, one could be paired with a Lehman, another with a Wertheim. The Morgenthaus therefore belong securely in the red-hot heart of the all-but-extinct American-Jewish-German nobility.

A scion of this family, the author is 74 years old and has made some exceptional choices. Not only is he married to a Jewish woman, but one who comes from Poland, a match as rare in the good old days of Our Crowd as a solar eclipse. His marriage to Ruth Schachter, he says truly and with pride, was "a drastic departure." Furthermore, he has seen to it that their children got the basic education in Judaism that he didn't. These choices followed on and sharpened what he calls his "experience of Jewish rebirth," itself a reaction to the Holocaust, the rise of Israel, and the "malaise" his parents imbued him with at an early age in the face of all things Jewish. The book he has written is therefore pretty special. It isn't first-class history and doesn't unpack all the rooms and closets in the mansion with a convincing or brilliant thesis. Too much of it is in the where-I-was-when-I-heard-about-Pearl Harbor mode. But it does fairly honestly tell the Morgenthau family's story, a tale of glory and melancholy not without parallels in the general experience of American Jews.

The author may be aware that social and economic success in the New World has been the undoing of his fellow Jews. But he never comes to grips with this paradox, either in the large or within the compass of his story. "A social-archaeological dig," he calls it. And indeed, besides tapping his memories and those of his relatives, he has traveled to Bavaria to rummage in the Mannheim archives and rub moss off gravestones, interviewed people who worked for his father at the Treasury Department, had Eleanor Roosevelt's letters to his mother deciphered, read the FBI dossiers on Harry Dexter White, and sifted through his grandfather's papers in the Library of Congress and his father's 900-volume diary at the FDR Library. He acknowledges the help of his cousin, the late Barbara Tuchman, and one suspects that this gifted historian, along with his editors, saved the author from drowning in his material.

If he lacks a thesis, he does have an approach, and not a bad one—he is forgiving, even fond, yet not blind. He mentions things no authorized work could include, thanks to which his subjects, every so often, jump off the page. Lazarus was "manic": his brood hired Pinkerton's to shadow him and briefly had him committed. As for Henry Sr., though he gained the fortune that eluded Lazarus, was embraced by Our Crowd, and became ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, only his own son's fame eased the disappointment and bitterness of his old age. It is important to note—Henry III doesn't—that this fortune was a middling one. It wasn't in the Rockefeller or Kennedy or Guggenheim league; it was, and is, just enough to enable its creator and his seed to do something more useful than work for a living. That something, that "religion," was to be "service to democracy," writes the author. As soon as Henry Sr. got the money, he went into behind-the-scenes do-gooder politics. An early check-writer for presidential candidate Wilson, he de-

Edward Norden, a regular contributor, is writing a book on the future of the Jews.

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sired a cabinet post, but had to make do with Constantinople. There he publicized what the Turks were doing to the Armenians and facilitated the transport of several crates of bullion to Palestine's starving Jews. But his diplomatic career was a failure, for which he blamed the ingrate, cunning, pushy Zionists.

Like the rest of Our Crowd, Henry Sr. deplored Jewish nationalism, apprehending it, in his grandson's words, as a "renunciation of newly won rights and acceptance" in America. This did not stop him from being favorably impressed by the muscular, tanned Jews he met in Zion, and aiding them with that gold shipment. Non-Zionist pillars of Our Crowd like Jacob Schiff and Felix Warburg would find ways to help out without signing on. Maybe Henry Sr. could have been with them if his attempt on Wilson's behalf to sound out the Turks on a separate peace in 1917 hadn't bombed as it did. "From the time he joined the mission, [Felix] Frankfurter served as a Zionist mole bent on informing, leaking, and eventually blowing the mission out of the water," Henry III writes. Yet he understands that his grandfather was out of his depth and why these feelers were mischievous—the assumption on which the Balfour Declaration was being cooked was that the Ottoman Empire was doomed. Henry Sr., having perhaps exceeded his instructions, was recalled and scapegoated by Wilson. From that point, he was "something of a loose cannon," putting Zionism down as "the most stupendous fallacy in Jewish history."

What he knew of Jewish history wasn't much, and this was typical. Already in Mannheim, Lazarus had uncovered his head, shaved his beard, and joined the Reform temple, a mock church. His son and grandson in Manhattan would go him one better by flirting with Ethical Culture, a steppingstone to Unitarianism. True, the Morgenthaus didn't convert—this book would not exist if they had. But so far had they come by 1917, when the Balfour Declaration was publicized and the author born, that he wasn't even circumcised. "By the time I came into the world," he writes, "all significant vestiges of ethnicity in my family had been thoroughly camouflaged." It was more than a matter of Our Crowd's bacon, Christmas trees, and Easter bunnies. Their lifestyle was modeled on that of the richer WASPs, not, God forbid, those consuming outrageously at Newport, yet still complete with jodhpurs and country seats. Most of these Jews knew only enough about being Jewish to suffer privately from it. As the author says, "It was a kind of birth defect that could not be eradicated but with proper treatment could be overcome, if not in this generation then probably in the next."

The "treatment" was and is complete assimilation through conversion and/or intermarriage. Why has it been only in the last thirty or forty years that Our Crowd, and after it the great-grandchildren of the Lower East Siders, have gone in for these cures, especially intermarriage, in such a big way? Is it because America until the last generation wasn't all that accepting? Or is it because the older members of Our Crowd, now buried in Reform cemeteries, uneasy as they were about their Jewishness, harbored too much snobbery, decorousness, pride, or social anxiety to try to break all the way out? The author doesn't pose, much less try to answer, these questions. He does make it plain with some charming insider stories and memories that his childhood was spent almost entirely with the other boys and girls of Our Crowd in the plush ghetto of the Upper West Side, from which excursions were mounted to the Dutchess County farm, Deerfield Academy, and, when FDR moved into it, the White House.

For where Henry Sr. had failed, Henry Jr. made good. To be sure, he was pushed by his father and assisted by his wife, the author's mother Elinor, who possibly was Eleanor Roosevelt's best friend. Henry Sr. faintly resembled Joseph Kennedy. "My grandfather was determined that in a Roosevelt administration his son would have the cabinet post of which he himself felt deprived by Wilson." So the old man sent his son to Exeter, where he was "miserable," set him up as a gentleman farmer in Dutchess County, where he lost money growing apples and was Governor Roosevelt's neighbor, and shelled out for the latter's presidential campaign. With such a father and FDR as a boss, no wonder Henry Jr. was periodically knocked out by migraines. Yet according to their son, the marriage of Henry Jr. and Elinor Fatman, of Lehman stock, was a "true love match." She bucked him up and gave War Bond speeches for him when the Secretary of the Treasury was out with a headache. Elinor also used her best connection for her children's benefit—on the day after Christmas, 1940, the White House was the scene of her daughter Joan's coming-out party, an event even the author is still thrilled by.

His father's pull and money catapulted Henry Jr. into FDR's field of vision. He was always utterly loyal, yes, and FDR valued that, although cruelly he never allowed his friend to feel totally confident about his position, either in government or in his affections. Nor did Eleanor, with whom she rode, let Elinor feel it. "Neither of them," the author says of his parents *vis-à-vis* the First Family, "ever felt secure," the deb party notwithstanding. Perhaps the Morgenthaus were overly touchy, perhaps the Roosevelts were political in all their dealings—the author broaches both possibilities. Yet Henry Jr. had a lock on the Treasury job. Not only was he loyal—he got done what his boss wanted done, rewrote the tax laws to soak their fellow rich, and ran Lend-Lease devotedly when the British were fighting the Germans alone. After Pearl Harbor he, more than anyone else, was responsible for gearing the economy up to make total war.

On balance, Henry Jr. served his country beautifully. He also went out of his way to try to help his fellow Jews. It was as if he were heeding Wilson's advice to his father before Henry Sr. departed for Constantinople: "Remember that anything you can do to improve the lot of your co-religionists is an act that will reflect credit upon America." The circumstances were now different. If the Turks had ill-used a handful of Jews, the Germans were exterminating millions. Of course, FDR regretted what the enemy was doing, but preferred to concentrate on winning the war—besides, he was idolized by American Jews and didn't have to worry about their votes. Unlike Frankfurter and Bernard Baruch, who feared its being known as the Jew Deal, Morgenthau was shocked enough, and had a good enough character, to demand specific action, even at a cost to his standing with President Roosevelt.

Granted, he didn't ask the commander-in-chief to order the bombing of Auschwitz. This idea is not mentioned by the author, but it was an operation the U.S. was capable of, and one for which some Jews and non-Jews pleaded in vain. To press FDR on this would no doubt have been too much even for the shaken Morgenthau, who owed his career to him. Henry Jr. could be courageous or shy, he could be superb or dim, as, for example, when he hadn't a clue that Harry Dexter White, one of his Jewish lieutenants at Treasury, was probably working for Stalin. What he did press for and eventually got was more symbolic, though it did save a few lives. Incited by his Christian lieutenants—Randolph Paul, John Pehle, and Josiah E. DuBois—he convinced the President to establish the War Refugee Board (WRB). The paper written by DuBois, entitled "Report to the Secretary on the Acquiescence of the Government to the Murder of the Jews," was toned down by Henry to "Personal Report to the President" before being delivered to the Oval Office. The resulting WRB, fund-

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ed mostly from private donations, forced the anti-Semites in the State Department to issue visas and other travel documents to what by 1944 the author says was a "heart-rendingly disappointing number" of people on the run.

The National Holocaust Memorial opens on the Mall this year. Will visitors be apprised of this history? They should be. It helps explain many things, including why the U.S. had to step in before Saddam destroyed the Kurds. It also helps explain the political culture of American Jews in the last generation—what the fathers and grandfathers were afraid or ashamed or too slow to do, what they lacked the chutzpah for, a sufficient number of their children, even when intermarried, have not been afraid, indeed have felt impelled, to say and write and do for Israel and the Soviet Jews. Exceptionally for an American Jew of his age and class, Henry Morgenthau III has no reason to be ashamed of his father's role. Indeed he is proud of it. As he is of the guts it required to promote his unwise plan to de-industrialize Germany after the war, and the fundraising he organized for Israel after Harry Truman let him go and he agreed to head the United Jewish Appeal.

"Don't have anything to do with the Jews. They'll stab you in the back," Henry Sr. cautioned his son. Sure enough, Henry Jr. got mixed up in Jewish wars, and later withdrew. But his few years in cahoots with the Zionists were important to Israel at its birth, giving him perhaps his least complicated, most autonomous feeling of accomplishment and marking a path for his own son, the author. "I cannot recall ever having a serious discussion with my father about Jewish matters," says Henry III, yet it may have been his father's challenge to FDR and defiance of Henry Sr., both times on the topic of the Jews, that gave Henry III a better angle on that "birth defect." Surely the experience of fighting in Patton's 3rd Army also helped. After all, at Princeton before the war, he—the son of a cabinet officer—had been ignored by the clubs, an "emasculating experience." His father had migraines, and the author when young had stomach aches. These were the symptoms not merely of a poor little rich kid, but a certain type of Jewish rich kid. "I moved through stages of self-hatred, anger, assertiveness, and, eventually, acceptance leading to a positive re-identification," Henry III writes.

His marriage, he implies, was the biggest forward step he took. Which is not to say that he so much as hints that those of his friends and relatives who chose otherwise, who married out, did anything wrong. "Of Grandpa Morgenthau's twelve grandchildren . . . about half had wedded Christians." The author's brother, Robert, famous district attorney of Manhattan and scourge of BCCI, has intermarried twice. The DA, it is pointed out, nevertheless sits on the board of Temple Emanu-el and is friends with Ariel Sharon. Like his brother, the author is a Democrat and a liberal, as most Americans of Jewish background still are. The reader is at a loss to say whether Henry III realizes how typical his exalted family is, and how badly some liberal shiboleths and Jewish survival go together in the Diaspora. If Jews are an endangered species in America, it's because of intermarriage. And if there's anything classically illiberal, it's resistance to intermarriage. Brave as his long march has been, the author doesn't seem to understand, or want to face, the connection between liberalism-in-action and what he calls the "dissolution" of American Jewry.

However, he has three kids: Sarah, Kramer, and Henry IV. Maybe when one of them brings the history of the dynasty up to date, he or she will check out that link. ❐

THE LAST LEOPARD: A LIFE OF GIUSEPPE TOMASI DI LAMPEDUSA

David Gilmour

Pantheon Books/223 pages/$22

reviewed by RICHARD LAMB

In Italy, whenever a southern aristocrat of a certain era dies, the obituaries mourn the loss of "the last leopard." The allusion is to *The Leopard*, by Giuseppe di Lampedusa. David Gilmour's *The Last Leopard* is Lampedusa's story. It is a slim volume about an enigmatic man who wrote, towards the end of his uneventful life, a luminous book.

With some careful cutting and pasting, one could construct an amusing biography of Giuseppe Tomasi, Prince of Lampedusa, one full of romance and absurdity. He was born in Palermo in 1896, when "one of the least distinguished aristocracies in Europe"—the Sicilian—was enjoying its golden age. Personages from Puccini to the Kaiser were entertained in Palermo's *casas*, as chic Palermitans referred to their palazzos, and a sailor-suited Giuseppe met Napoleon III's widow, who reportedly exclaimed "*Quel joli petit!*"

The Lampedusas were an ancient family, possibly descended from Tiberius, but a nineteenth-century patriarch had died intestate, and a legal imbroglio worthy of *Bleak House* ensued. Yet despite his family's princely poverty Giuseppe insisted that his was an idyllic childhood. He was inordinately close to his mother, and remained so all his life. He spent World War I in the artillery, was wounded and captured at Trentino, and in the confusion of the war's end escaped from his Austrian captors. After a first, unsuccessful, attempt to escape, he was obliged to pay his train fare back to the prisoner-of-war camp as punishment. Known at the time by the courtesy title of Duke of Palma, Giuseppe attributed his indulgent treatment to the ducal coronet embroidered on his uniform.

After the war he had a nervous breakdown, possibly as a result of his war wound, which may have left him impotent. When Mussolini came to power, Giuseppe at first looked upon Fascism as an effective hedge against the Bolsheviks, then soured on it, finding its bluster "boring and rather ridiculous." In 1926 he visited his uncle, who was Italian ambassador to the Court of St. James's. Gauche by nature and by no means fluent in English, he was something of a social success in London, which Gilmour attributes to his being mistaken for the Duke of "Parma" by ambitious hostesses. Now an Italian province, Parma was an ancient duchy, ruled by the Farnese and later the Bourbons. It is famous for violets and cheese. Palma is a dusty village in Sicily.

Giuseppe, duke of a dusty village, be-

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came an anglophile while in England, admiring the reserve, irony, and eccentricity that, along with fatuousness, make up the English character. He also met Alessandra, a strapping Latvian baroness and stepdaughter of his uncle the ambassador. They kept in touch. In 1932, Giuseppe traveled from Palermo to Riga by way of Munich and, without telling his parents, married Alessandra in a Russian Orthodox ceremony.

Licy, as Giuseppe called her, was a practicing psychoanalyst who had just divorced her husband of fourteen years—a homosexual Estonian baron rather inevitably characterized by Gilmour as being of "considerable charm." Unfortunately, Licy refused to leave her Latvian castle at Stomersee. He was tied to Sicily and his mother, and so the two of them carried on a *matrimonio epistolare* in French.

After the Soviets turned Licy's castle into an agricultural school at the end of the war, the two lived together in Palermo. Giuseppe had become Prince of Lampedusa (a barren island off the African coast, inhabited by a handful of Maltese) on his father's death in 1934. In the fifties he gave private lectures in literature to some young friends as an amusement. Then, in early 1955, he began writing a novel. His friend, cousin, and rival Lucio Piccolo had just received a prize for his poetry, and Giuseppe was "mathematically certain" that he was no stupider than Lucio. The result was *Il Gattopardo*, which means ocelot, but is translated as *The Leopard.*

Il Gattopardo was rejected by several publishers during the last year of the Prince's life. Then, only months after he died of lung cancer in 1957, Lampedusa's widow was contacted by the Italian publisher Feltrinelli, who had received a copy of the manuscript by circuitous means, and with whom she signed a disadvantageous contract. Within a year the book had gone through fifty-two editions, won the prestigious Strega prize, and was on its way to becoming an international bestseller. It is still in print, and on the back of the peach-colored Pantheon paperback edition you will see that the English novelist L. P. Hartley called it "perhaps the greatest novel of the century," which may be as close as Hartley himself came to a bid for immortality.

The Leopard is set against the background of the Risorgimento, when Italy was united under Piedmontese control. It is about an aristocratic family headed by a proud prince. His beloved nephew marries a rich, beautiful woman whose father is a money-grubbing vulgarian, and whose grandfather was an unlettered, probably criminal, peasant. The nephew, Tancredi, is poor, his forebears having "romped through half a dozen fortunes." The prince accepts the union, accepts that the world is changing, even embraces the political upheavals. Yet as he dies he mourns the fact that he will be the last to have a sense of the unique traditions that define a noble family. The splendor of his estates and palazzi will be transformed, he predicts, into "pots of quickly swallowed *foie gras*" and "noisy little women, as transient as their rouge."

The book is frequently described as having been written in "the grand manner," and Lampedusa lauded for ignoring literary fads. Yet, unlike most writers about whom this could be said, Lampedusa was steeped in the traditions of European literature. As one might expect from a first novel by someone so well-read, there is a ghostly chorus of predecessors echoing throughout the book. It has become a game: Lampedusa has been compared to Stendhal, Ariosto, Leopardi, Verga, De Roberto, Pirandello, Brancati, Gogol, Balzac, Flaubert, Maupassant, Zola, D'Annunzio, and, by Gilmour, to Conrad. There are others: here an interminable burble of Proustian dependent clauses, there the glitter and minutely calibrated psychology of one of Tolstoy's dinners. It comes as no surprise to find out that Lampedusa was rereading *War and Peace* as he started his own work. There are scenes—dinners, a hunt, and a ball—and characters that are vaguely familiar, especially the Piedmontese *contino* who woos the wealthy Concetta with no success, as the comical Denisov, with his affected plunger's lall, does Natasha.

Much of the book's appeal lies with its protagonist, Fabrizio Corbera, Prince of Salina. Personal likability and literary likability sometimes overlap, but they are unrelated. The Prince of Salina—arrogant, melancholic, and cold—is not a nice man. Lampedusa characterizes him as a scientist, half-Teuton, whose interest in mathematics is almost a "sinful perversion," and who is alienated from his peers, "isolated, not as he thought, from respect, but from fear." Yet as a character he is irresistible, and he is as lodged in the Italian popular imagination as James Bond and Holden Caulfield are in ours. Like Bond, who is by his creator's assertion fastidious and "old-maidish," or Holden, who is mentally ill and something of a loser, Fabrizio has come to fill an unintended niche: he has been taken up as the archetypal southern Italian aristocrat.

Gilmour's biography is hardly a success, but not all of its problems can be put at his feet. The events I have mentioned above come from the years 1900, 1915-19, 1926, 1932, and 1955-57. That leaves fifty-one years in the life of Giuseppe di Lampedusa about which there is little to say. Until World War II he lived with his parents, in his childhood room. Even when his palazzo was destroyed by American bombing during the war, his quiet routine remained unchanged.

Other portions of Lampedusa's life have been lost entirely, despite Gilmour's preening about the caches of documents he found in Giuseppe's adopted son's house. There are "a number of mysteries about Giuseppe's university career"; there are "even more mysteries about Lampedusa's military career." "There is a frustrating lack of information about Giuseppe's relations with other people during this period [in England]." The result is a watery, journalistic account.

A man so reserved and so idle poses a problem for biographers. It is one faced by novelists, too: how to turn a colorless person into an interesting "character." Certainly it is not insurmountable—who would want to be trapped in an elevator with Emma Bovary?—but Gilmour doesn't succeed. He is sympathetic to Lampedusa, even to the point of being a quasi-apologist for his rather pathetic marriage. Yet the shambling fatalism, the prickly wit, the erudition of the man are deeply endearing, and Gilmour rarely brings them to life.

One exception is Gilmour's portrait of Lampedusa's relationship with his odd, Sitwellesque cousins the Piccolos. Lucio was an amateur astronomer, occultist, mathematician, poet, composer, and Greek and Persian scholar, who spent much of his time writing an unfinished Magnificat. They ate well, kept vicious dogs, and sometimes obliged guests to play an assigned role. One visitor was asked to play a bishop, and behave like "a hypocrite and false mediator." It is in their company that Giuseppe seems most alive in *The Last Leopard.* Scenes such as the one in which he tried to fix Lucio up with a nurse, so she could provide him with an heir, are a delight. Lucio overindulged in a dinner of pasta and was too sick to go through with the plan. The nurse turned out to have a boyfriend. Even if Lampedusa is a shadowy figure for most of the book, the image of two fat, gentle, learned, clueless aristocrats barreling off to Palermo to proposition a nurse for the sake of the family honor is vivid and comic and touching. ❐

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The federal government has assumed the role of wage-earning parents and destroyed initiative, pride and the family value system. Americans must learn to limit family size based on what they can personally afford. Single parent "families" with 10, 12, even 14 (and more!) children foster larger and larger gang membership rolls. Then, as adults, far too many become career criminals and welfare baby factories themselves. The unmarried moms and wayward kids can't compete, and don't even try, but they know Uncle will support them. They have to learn to help themselves and be independent.

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MR. TERM LIMITS
(continued from page 41)

party vacancy committee, Considine challenged the runaway favorite, changed many votes, and won the seat. Since then, he has been on something of a roll. Against almost hysterical opposition, he ushered a bill through the legislature forcing metropolitan Denver's transit agency to contract out 20 percent of its bus routes to private providers—the first such law in the nation and one that is saving the agency millions. He drafted an air-quality law that set a visibility standard for Denver's notorious smog. He established a training program for prospective GOP candidates and launched his term-limits drive. In the eyes of many party regulars, Considine has finally paid his dues. Although at least three other candidates will vie for the nomination, he is the overwhelming favorite to lock up the right to run against Wirth.

Challenging even a one-term incumbent will not be an enviable assignment. Although clearly to the left of the average Colorado voter, Wirth is polished, combative, and a great fund-raiser who will outspend any opponent. Considine faces the added disadvantage of a late start; he broke his back in a riding accident last summer and his recovery won't be complete until spring.

If Considine loses to Wirth, however, it won't be for the usual Republican sin of failing to offer a clear alternative. Still immobilized in a hospital bed last October, Considine gushed with policy proposals, everything from indexing capital gains to encouraging educational choice by granting parents the right to organize their own public schools. He also plumped for a state ballot initiative he might sponsor in 1992 to limit the growth of government spending. He even wondered if the term-limits organizations being created in nearly two dozen states could be used someday to hold "a de facto national referendum" on other issues that Congress refuses to touch.

He is under no illusions about what he could achieve in the U.S. Senate. About a conversation he had a year ago with House Minority Whip Newt Gingrich, Considine recalls: "He was going on and on about what could be accomplished for the country if we only had a GOP Congress. Finally I interrupted him and said, 'Hey, I'm in a legislature that's two-thirds Republican, and we still can't do those things.' The problem isn't just the Democrats. The problem is the system and the incentives in it." And the Republicans, he might have added. ❒

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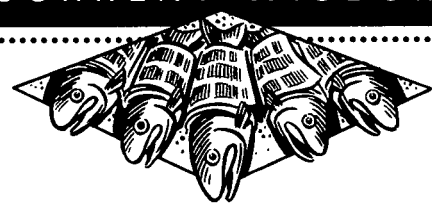

Newhall Signal & Saugus Enterprise
(Saugus, California)
Still more evidence for the end of history:

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. . . The application of Deborah Anne Ziegler for change of name(s) having been filed in Court, and it appearing from said application that Deborah Anne Ziegler has filed an application proposing that her name(s) be changed to Euphrasia Lavette Alzena Guri Scientia Ventura Ikiru Alvera Ganbatte Gelasia Curvilinearjky . . .
[August 9, 1991]

San Francisco Chronicle
On the Howl Page of a great American gazette, Scott from Clearlake Park flourishes pretty letters and a level of ratiocination that should make him a shoo-in as next president of Stanford University:

A wild pig does not wake up this morning with premeditated plans to kill a human. Why then do we grant ourselves the right to go out "in season" every year to slay wild pigs? . . . And why is saving a human life so important? The way I observe homo sapiens, perpetually molesting the Earth's crust, spreading toxicosis on the plants, birds, mammals, fish, wildflowers, trees, even each other, I perceive no value in human salvation.

With a planet whose sustenance level becomes strained at 1 billion homo sapiens—we now have 6 billion and rising. And of the 6 billion, how many are additional earthly saboteurs? Just what are we headed for? We need more wild pigs, peregrine falcons, manatees, daddy long-legs, phainopepla and orb-weavers; less you-know-who. *—Scott Klynstra*
Clearlake Park
[November 22, 1991]

The Great Books Series
The First Amendment taken to the outer limits of the tolerable by another arrested eight-year-old:

I wish there was a rutting season. Although it might make life less exciting, it would make life much easier. I am distracted by women all the time, on a moment to moment basis—women on the street, women sitting in a car, driving by in a car. I'm very attracted to women. I'm very attracted by what they look like, constantly. This is a burden. I could think better and concentrate better if there was a mating season, instead of this biological signal all the time to spread your seed.

It seems to me it would be less distracting to have all your sex in May and June. Then you could have the baby in the winter or the spring. Men would be less tormented, and so would women, if they weren't constantly being distracted by sex. The world would probably work better. People would kill each other less.

[from That's How Men Are, *by Mark Baker. Simon and Schuster, 258 pages, $22.50]*

New York Times
An inscrutable communiqué from Miss Roberta Smith, amok somewhere in greater Manhattan:

Adam Rolston's plea for safe sex is an installation piece that effectively imitates a warehouse full of condoms. The gallery's carpet has been taken up to reveal a scruffy paint-stained floor; the space is stacked high with cardboard cartons all printed with the words "Trojan Condoms." . . . The final twist is that Mr. Rolston did not appropriate his brand-name cartons, as Warhol did, since his particular product travels, in bulk, in vacuum-sealed plastic (128 12-condom units per pack, to be exact). Instead, these cartons have been designed and fabricated by the artist from scratch and are on sale for $20 each in a strictly cash-and-carry arrangement.
[September 20, 1991]

Parade
From the distinguished James Michener, the case for slavery:

The best money I have spent in my lif was not that used to make me either hap pier or more comfortable, but the taxes have paid to the various governments un der which I have lived. In general, gov ernments have spent their share of m money more wisely and with better re sults than I have spent my own funds and one aspect of my life about which am most ashamed is that I spent most of decade living in three states that had n state income tax—Texas, Florida an Alaska—and the deficiencies that th first two suffered because of that lac were evident daily. I like states like Ne York, Massachusetts and California which do tax and spend their incom wisely.
[November 24, 1991]

Village Voice
From the last outpost of totalitarian ism, a brave American dissident dare to speak out:

I agree that the marking and piercing o one's body is akin to a spiritual self-recla mation; it can be tremendously empowe ing to take one's body back from the soci ety that would claim even that. In th 1970s, more of the heavy piercing *was* hap pening in the gay S&M/leather crowd, bu times have changed: witness the prolifera tion of homegirls and so-called "normal people with pierced noses. Ten years ago, pierced nose was a sure sign of a plunge of the deep end into either the hardcore under ground or a religious cult. I often explai that my large snake-and-fire tattoo is not sign of my affiliation with a biker gang, no a sign of my sexual preference, but wa carefully chosen for its mystical an mythological symbolism.
—Dina Emerso
Brookly
[November 26, 1991]

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Michigan Citizen

(Benton Harbor, Michigan)

An artful appraisal of the rise of three of the greatest black columnists in the history of the world:

Some call these types Black Conservatives. Others call them BUPPIES, but a more appropriate term for them is "Sellouts." The term is most descriptive of those from this political camp. . . . A quick review of the newspaper columns of any of the darlings of the rightwing such as Thomas Sowell, Walter Williams and Emmett Tyrrell will reveal not one word of criticism of the Reagan-Bush establishment.

[October 27, 1991]

The Great Books Series

Finally someone has mustered the guts to speak the unspeakable, to write the unwritable, and to bring honor to Yale University—Miss Vicki Hearne of the Institution for Social and Policy Studies:

And I have never seen a stallion or a dog commit rape. I have seen dogs and horses pester mares and bitches unmercifully, but have never seen them have their feelings hurt when they were turned down. I have seen something like this:

In the period when the female is becoming interesting to the male but is herself indifferent to the arrows of Eros, he makes a proper nuisance of himself, jumping about, pleading, poking, pawing at her, or dashing around splendidly with his hooves high, his nostrils flaring, and his voice reverberating, in the case of horses. And the mare says, "Yuck! Forget it!" while turning her hind end dangerously and rejectingly rather than invitingly in his direction. In the case of dogs, the female often makes a horribly ugly noise, snarling at him, *Gwangetouttahereyouretooblameduuuuuugly!* She punctuates these points with her fine, white, efficient teeth. He leaves for a while, feeling sorry for himself, and then he thinks, "Time has passed. Maybe she's ready by now." All of half a minute may have gone by, so she snarls and snaps again, and again he tumbles end over end. He doesn't eat, is untrustworthy with the other males, and all the rest of it.

But here is what does not happen. He doesn't start feeling guilty and unworthy so that when the glorious time of her readiness is at hand she has to hunt him up and explain things to him, soothe his ego and all. And he does not rape her.

[from Bandit: Dossier of a Dangerous Dog, *by Vicki Hearne. HarperCollins, 293 pages, $22]*

Patriot News

(Harrisburg, Pennsylvania)

From Harrisburg, the familiar high intellection of a university professor:

During his career Judge Thomas consistently displayed the "cooperative captive" syndrome, whereby a captive will emulate his captors to the extreme. This is done in order to survive. Examples abound: inmate guards in Nazi camps more cruel than their masters; prisoners of war betraying their fellow prisoners and religious converts persecuting former co-religionists with zeal.

In order for a black man to succeed, or even survive, under the blatantly anti-minority and anti-civil rights administrations of Reagan and Bush he had to out-Klan the Klan.

—Geir Magnusson
Mechanicsburg

[December 2, 1991]

New York Times

A late-twentieth century visionary envisages the greatest Fourth of July ever, and a swell way to smite Old Sol for all those infra-red rays and new dawns:

"Nuclear Designers from East and West Plan Bomb Disposal" (Science Times, Dec. 17) on a meeting of scientists to discuss disposal of nuclear weapons, prompts me to offer a suggestion I've been thinking about for some time. Let us mark the year 2000 with a worldwide celebration as we send all nuclear weapons to the sun, itself a nuclear entity.

I call it a potlatch—a feast traditionally practiced by Indian groups of the Northwest Coast and Alaska, in which the chiefs of warring groups tried to outdo one another in disposing of their wealth. Let them guide the leaders of the superpowers in planning the ceremony.

Ridding the planet of these weapons would be a priceless gift and a brilliant message to ourselves—"the human race has overcome the arms race and has chosen life instead of destruction."

Everyone could get involved, from governments to schoolchildren. Scientists could handle the technical side, and the rest of us could plan a party on a scale never seen before. Something of this magnitude would capture the imagination and just possibly might help to unite us in a peaceful world community.

It's just a thought, but we have eight years to try and make it a reality.

—Carol Delaney
Stanford, California

[December 30, 1991]

Vanity Fair

Erotica turned into mush by another new age goodie-goodie:

Koons's current work was inspired by Ilona Staller's *pornographia*—both her photographic work and her performances in which she sings and dances naked. "Ilona uses her body in the way another artist uses a paintbrush or a chisel," Koons told me. His manner is puppyish, urgent: his eyes have an earnest glow. He speaks with the soft monotone of a theological seminarian. "She uses her genitalia. And she communicates a very precise language with her genitalia."

Just what do Ilona's genitalia say?

Marina, the interpreter, a fine-boned Venetian with an expression at once alert and baffled, gave a nervous giggle.

"The vocabulary tells you that you can find a lot of beauty in life. You must embrace life. And there's no reason not to have confidence. Life can be really beautiful!"

[November 1991]

Plain Press

(Cleveland, Ohio)

The periphrastic George Silis, of Cleveland's august *Plain Press*, offers yet more proof that even a moron can master the complexities of the word-processor:

Shirley MacLaine, possibly the greatest actress of all time, has a dual nature. In reality she is an actress, a dancer, a national treasure, an astute businesswoman, a brilliant writer of New Age subjects presenting alternative realities to a confused world, and possibly the most accomplished woman of modern times . . . the lovable, kooky, softhearted, friendly girl-next-door.

. . . And through the mental process of nostalgia, the power of Shirley MacLaine does not diminish in time but in fact multiplies a thousandfold.

Many writers suggest that we need new gods. . . . This writer . . . suggests that if we need a goddess to worship Shirley MacLaine would be a perfect candidate.

But this is not only a suggestion. This writer is actually predicting that 500 years from now the world will be worshipping Shirley MacLaine.

[December 1991–January 1992]

Anna Quindlen is on vacation.

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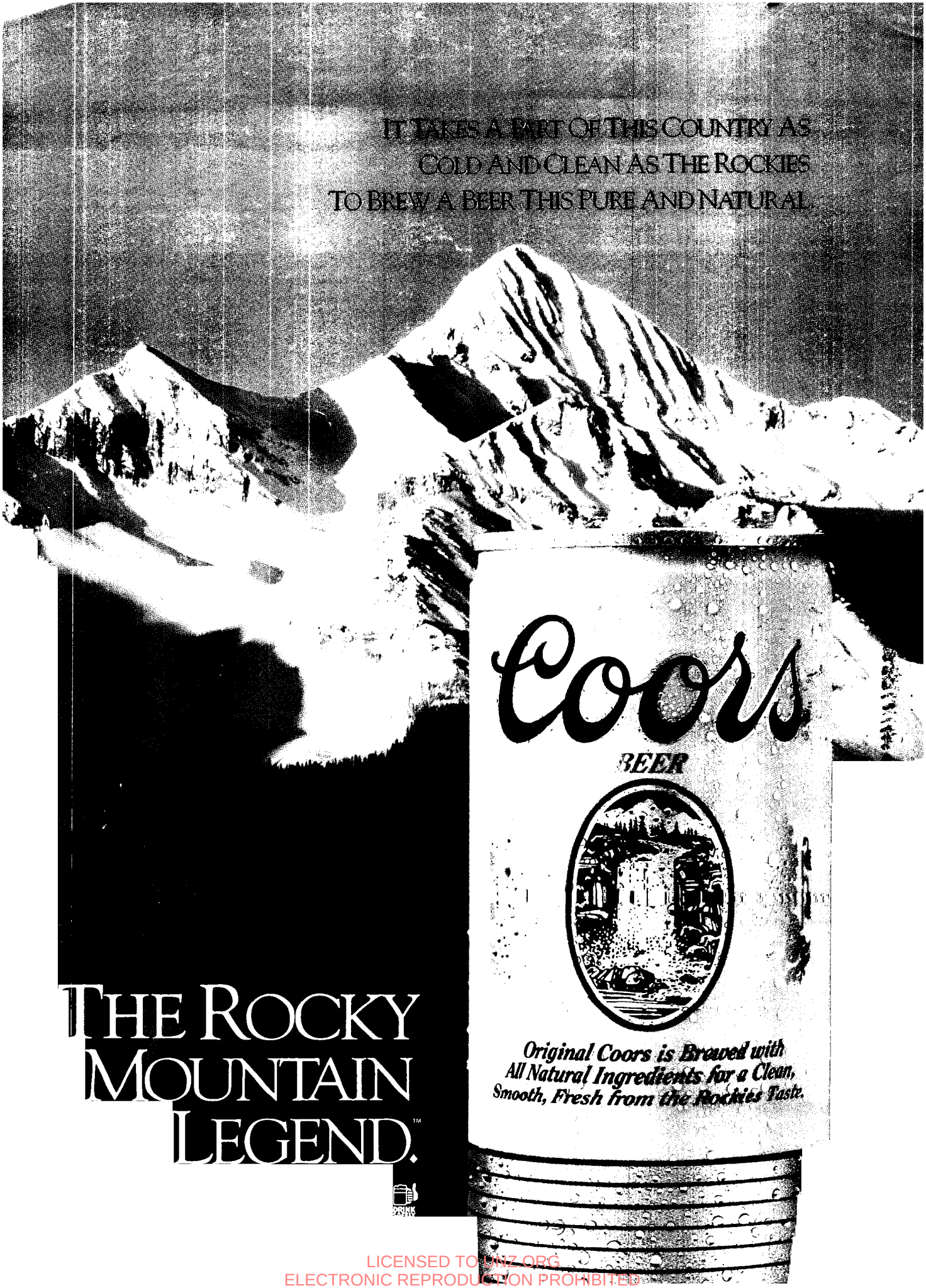
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